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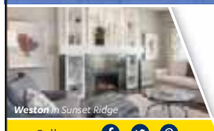

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Pleading for more PTSD awareness

Michael McNeil's death was the latest in string of military suicides PAGE 20

Rob Ford in trouble; in other news, the sun rose

T.O. mayor calls newest allegation — of consorting with gang members — an 'outright lie' PAGE 26

WHERE'S HOME ALONE 2: LOST IN NEW YORK?

REEL GUYS TALK ABOUT THEIR FAVOURITE HOLIDAY MOVIES ... NOT ALL OF THEM ARE SO FEEL-GOOD PAGE 35

'WE'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER'

Former South African president and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela in 2005. More coverage on page 34.
GIANLUIGI GUERCIA/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Legacy. Calgary's South African and other expats remember a 'hero'

On the day his hero died, Calgary educator Michael Embaie remembered visiting Nelson Mandela's prison home of nearly two decades.

Standing in the damp eight-square-foot concrete cell with a "tiny" straw bed, the Eritrean-born Embaie recalled struggling to hold back emotions when thinking of Mandela's commitment to ending white minority rule in South Africa.

"He never compromised his principles and mission when in jail — despite all sorts of injustice to him," said Embaie, who now heads the African Community Association of Calgary.

Earlier in the day, South African President Jacob Zuma announced the world's most famous political prisoner had died at age 95. Dressed in black, Zuma said Mandela died "peacefully," surrounded by family, at around 8:50 p.m Thursday.

The news quickly spread and Mandela was celebrated as a champion of the anti-apartheid movement, South Africa's first black president and icon for future generations.

Premier Alison Redford referred to Mandela as a friend, citing the time spent together straightening out South Africa's legal system in the 1990s.

Mandela would go on to a landslide victory in the country's first truly democratic presidential election.

"He taught me that the best advice comes from people who have been working in the trenches, and that leaders have to sacrifice," Redford said in a statement.

Calgary travel agent Lesley Keyter recalled growing up in Johannesburg but chose to move to the country of Swaziland to escape the apartheid regime. She praised the renowned freedom fighter for his tolerance, forgiveness and understanding.

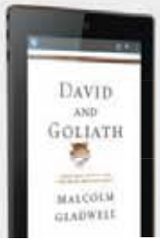
"Mandela was a hero to many people all over the world with his courage," said Keyter.

At SA Meat Shops Inc. in Calgary, Willem Van Der Walt was still absorbing the news.

"It's quite sad," said Van Der Walt, a born-and-raised South African. "It's hard to see good men go.

"We'll always remember."

BRYAN WEISMILLER/METRO
WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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NEWS 1

Diversity. UDI issues apology for article

Calgary's Urban Development Institute apologized Thursday for an article its CEO admitted was poorly worded after numerous people, including Mayor Naheed Nenshi, condemned the document as "bizarre" and "offensive."

"The article was really to celebrate diversity," UDI-Calgary CEO Guy Huntingford said. "Obviously the way we tried to portray that certainly didn't work."

Citing "an independent research project commissioned by UDI-Calgary," the article discusses why people choose to live where they do, and suggests: "They go where they feel they best fit in."

"And it doesn't just apply to visible minorities searching out the diaspora," the article reads. "It can be the guy with tattoos, feeling on display every time he shops at the Safeway on the city's periphery. Or the gay couple in a world of heterosexual suburbanites."

Nenshi said he found the article confusing.

"So what they're suggesting is we should have homelands within the city for different people?" the mayor said. "And certain kinds of people should stick with their own?"

Huntingford said UDI was actually trying to make "just the opposite" point but "obviously we didn't do a very good job of that."

The intent, Huntingford added, was to emphasize the need for housing choice.

"The whole point is that the city is diverse," he said. "That's one of the great things about Calgary."

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Calgary cab drivers are seeing fewer complaints lodged against them, but some have still been accused of breaking laws behind the wheel this year. METRO FILE

Complaints drop, but some cabbies still up to no good

Serious crimes. Alleged sexual assaults, an instance of drug trafficking among cabbie violations

JEREMY NOLAIS
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Cabbie complaints in Calgary have been curbed, but reports of serious crimes remain.

To November's end, city livery services had received 350 passenger complaints this year, varying from slow service and vehicle issues to alleged Criminal Code violations. In response, 120 violation tickets were issued and chief livery officer Marc Halat launched 29 licence-review hearings. In 19 of those instances, disciplinary action was taken.

Four of the complaints involved accusations of sexual assault, one driver was actually caught using his cab to transport illicit drugs and four others were accused of driving impaired while off the clock.

Still, Halat said the overall number of complaints is trending downwards despite more drivers being permitted to operate on city streets. The numbers do vary somewhat, however, as 528 complaints were lodged in 2012 but only 372 were lodged the year prior.

Halat's department is, however, on pace to hold its fewest number of licence-review hearings since it began tracking the number in 2008 and that's despite drivers seemingly being held to a higher standard. Last year, the city began taking taxi complaints directly through Calgary.ca as opposed to relying solely on reporting from brokers.

"Don't mess with Texas," Halat said of the new complaints system. "They know (the rules) and they know the penalties are severe."

Not all passengers called in to complain, either, as 50 this year actually felt satisfied enough with their cab service to register a compliment.

Delta Cab driver Rupinder Gill, who represents a group of drivers that has repeatedly butted heads with management while working for Associated Cab, said the new complaints system is a definite improvement.

"You can't trust the brokers with something like that," he said. "I see no problem with it — if I am doing my job properly, what do I have to hide?"

Passenger complaints

2009
Complaints: 752
Hearings: 47

2010
Complaints: 683
Hearings: 40

2011
Complaints: 372
Hearings: 51

2012
Complaints: 528
Hearings: 35

2013 (to Nov. 30)
Complaints: 350
Hearings: 29

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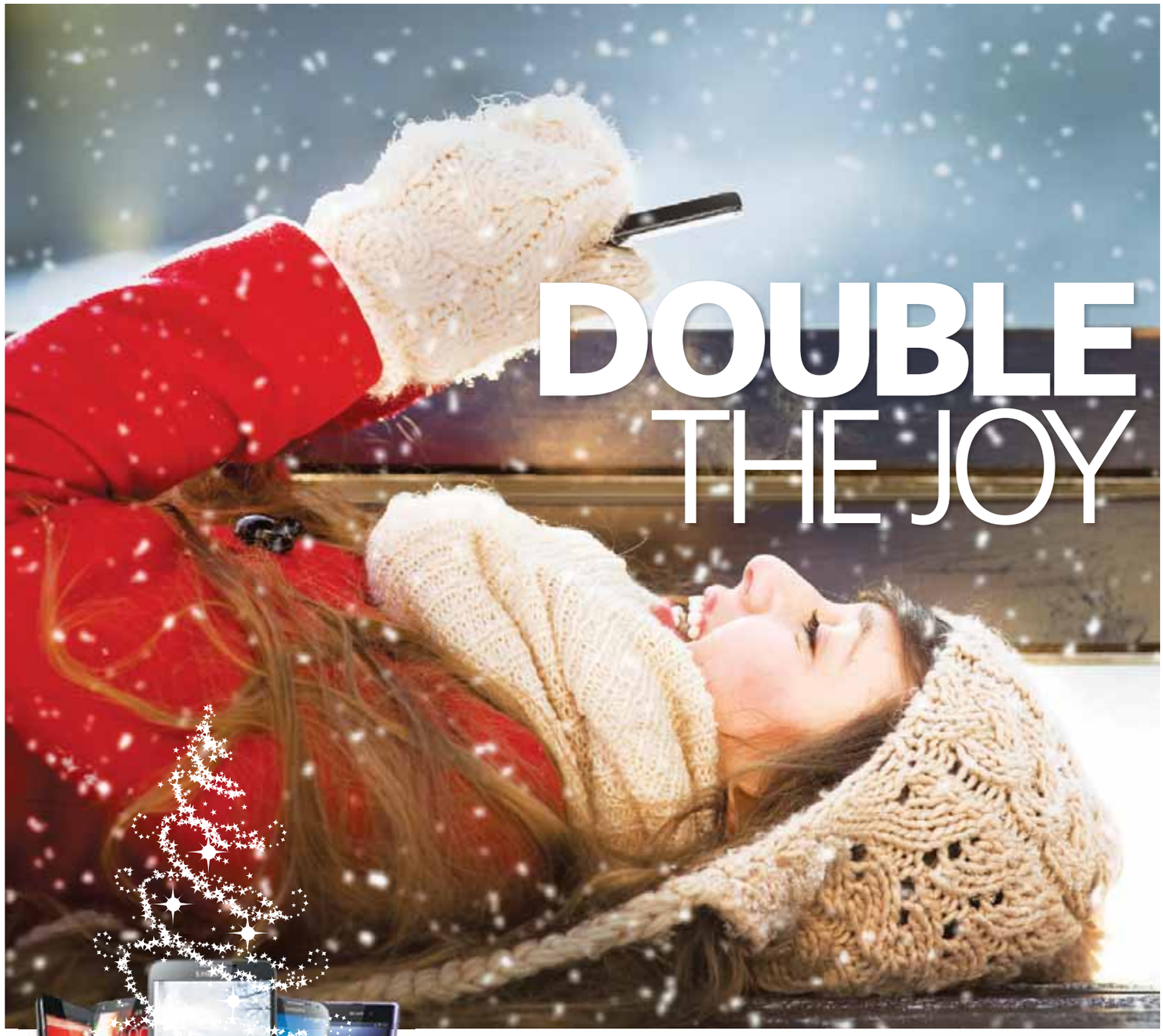

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Boys' HPV program 'will save an untold number of lives': Minister

Past controversy. Calgary Catholic School District welcomes the added immunizations

LEAH GERMAIN
calgary@metronews.ca

The best way to cure cancer is to not get cancer, said Alberta's chief medical officer as the province launched a new vaccination program for boys against the human papillomavirus on Thursday.

Kicking off in September, the program will be available to Grade 5 boys, much like Grade 5 girls, with a special "catchup" program for Grade 9 boys.

"In public health, we believe that prevention of disease is superior to diagnosis and treatment," said Dr. James Talbot.

Talbot noted the project has two goals. First, by immunizing boys, girls will have greater protection against HPV. Second, by offering the vaccine to a greater number of people, the province hopes it will become more routine for parents to immunize girls.

Health Minister Fred Horne called the initiative a hallmark for the health-care system, adding that the current immunization program for girls is almost 100 per cent effective in preventing the two forms of HPV that can lead to 70 per cent of all cervical cancers.

"This immunization will save an untold number of lives as these girls grow up. But HPV can also threaten the lives and futures of young men," Horne continued.

The Calgary Catholic School District promptly announced after the meeting it would adopt the program without further review. The organization previously held off on offering the girls' vaccination program for years amid fears that it promoted promiscuity.

WITH FILES FROM JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

Health Minister Fred Horne announces on Thursday a new anti-human-papillomavirus vaccination program for boys. LEAH GERMAIN/METRO

Local pot dealer says brethren will cash in on new law

Illegal dealers may see a bud-selling bonanza after new rules on who can grow marijuana come into effect, says a Calgary-area seller. METRO FILE

Chris runs an illegal marijuana grow operation about an hour's drive from Calgary.

He keeps things relatively small, only caring for 35 plants at a time. Plus, he admits to being a "heavy user" of his own product.

But he also maintains a network of about a dozen buyers, including some in Calgary. A few more suffer from serious health complications, and he provides them the drug free of charge.

Chris, whose last name is being withheld, offered his opinion on whether Calgary police are warranted in fearing that changes to federal marijuana laws will spur a bump in black-market sales.

Starting in April, home grow operations will be banned nationwide and thousands of marijuana users will be required to buy the product from commercial growers. But Chris said past government-run attempts have charged prices up to 15 times higher than what's offered at the street level.

Cost per ounce

$120

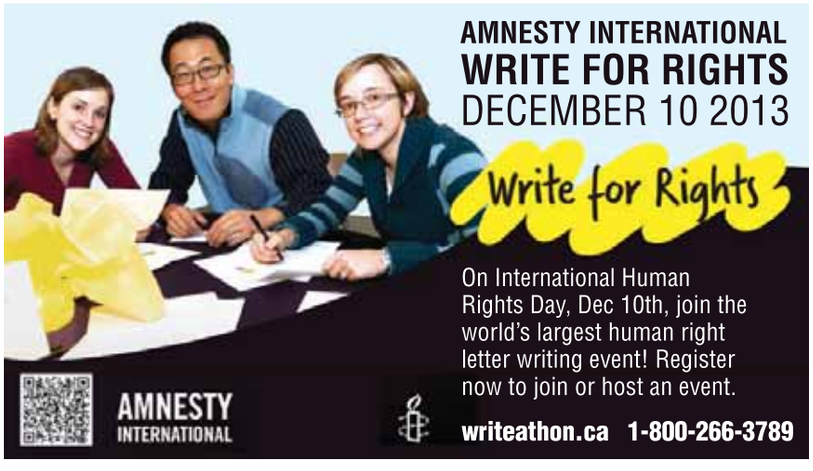
Chris said he currently charges $7-8 for a gram of marijuana, $30 for an eighth of an ounce and $100-120 for a full ounce.

"That's just simple economics.... Price dictates everything, and whoever's the cheapest is going to win," he said. "Illegal cultivators will be able to offer it at half the price."

Chris plans to keep his grow operation the same size but believes many other illegal cultivators will look to provide a "sea of green" for patients straying from Health Canada's program.

"There's always going to be somebody to fill the void," he added. "It's a money grab. Everybody's got their hand out and wants a piece of the pie."

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO



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Taxi Confessions. Office romances, stealing from your workplace and more

Play Taxi Media, the national network of in-taxi touch screens, surveyed more than 5,000 men and women in November 2013 on their behaviour in the workforce.

The results are interesting — to say the least!

Have you ever stolen from your place of employment? Would you believe that 40 per cent of men and women admit stealing from work?

Even more staggering is that when asked about their salary, those who consider themselves to be "overpaid" are the most common kleptomaniacs.

There may be some coal in a few stockings this holiday season!

Have you ever had an office romance (fling or relationship)? Forty-four per cent of men admit to having an intimate relationship at work, with 48 per cent of women admitting the same.

It seems that sparks fly when burning the candle at both ends!

Has a boss or superior ever made an advance towards you? Thirty per cent of men reported that a superior has crossed a professional line, with 41 per cent of women saying they have had a similar experience.

Who says love can't start in the workplace?

Play Taxi Media would like to sincerely thank our riders for their honest responses.

Be on the lookout January 2014 for part 2 of Play's Taxi Confession.

CONTRIBUTED

Ooh la la

44%

The per cent of 5,000 women surveyed by Play Taxi Media this November who admitted to having an intimate relationship at work. If you're curious, 44 per cent of men admitted to the same thing.

CALGARIANS CAN STOMACH TAX INCREASES, JUST BE STRAIGHT UP

IN DEFENCE OF
Mike Morrison
calgary@metronews.ca

When I was a kid, Disney's Robin Hood taught me one very important thing: Anyone who supports taxes must be the villain.

That movie should have been my first sign that Disney films would often lead me morally astray. That's with the exception of Siamese cats, which I'm sure we can all agree are evil — right?

Whether you choose to blame Disney or not, there's no denying that we live in a city and province needlessly terrified of taxes.

For what seems like at least 72 years, Calgarians have been debating what should be done with the $52-million surplus left over after the city absorbed the unused portion of the provincial education portion of the property tax.

But what can only be described as some sort of Black Friday miracle, the city finally made a decision last week.

But they did it in the sneakiest way possible.

Next year, the newly elected city council is giving people a one-time rebate of the "$52-million tax room," then it will use that tax room every year after that to pay for the new and awesome-sounding "Green Line" bus system.

Basically, it looks like a plan to have citizens believe they get money back, while council actually permanently raises taxes after that.

But here's the thing: I'm totally fine with you raising taxes, but why do it by acting like you're not?

The $100 rebate (which won't be actual cash like Ralph Bucks) is a one-time thing. Why not just ask me if I mind paying more taxes for improved infrastructure?

I, along with many Calgarians, would have probably said "yes."

How many times during the recent municipal elections did you hear someone run on the platform of not increasing taxes?

Rarely did they offer up solutions to Calgary's growing infrastructure need.

It's sort of like someone running for high school class president and promising to eliminate homework. Sadly, some of those people still found their way into city hall.

But this whole $52-million fiasco has revealed a deeper problem facing most governments, and that's their inability to talk to us like grown-ups.

Talk to me like an adult

The $100 rebate (which won't be actual cash like Ralph Bucks) is a one-time thing. Why not just ask me if I mind paying more taxes for improved infrastructure?

What we all want is infrastructure and services, in exchange for our tax dollars. If there is something that city needs, then tell us how much and explain how our taxes will make those goals possible.

Calgarians aren't stupid, but we aren't talking about city taxes every day and some of us just barely passed Grade 12 math. (Thanks again, Mr. Williams!)

The city should exercise some patience when explaining where our money is actually going.

And if all else fails, they should use an infographic. After all, who doesn't love an infographic?

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Non-profit. Mealshare helping to fill more bellies

Last July, Andrew Hall and Jeremy Bryant convinced two restaurants in Alberta to adopt their novel idea for tackling hunger.

Five months later, their operation has expanded to 30 restaurants in four cities across Western Canada.

"We're really excited by how much we've grown in just four months," Hall said. "We can't wait to see where it might go from here."

Mealshare is a non-profit that partners with restaurants to give meals to those in need in a novel way.

At participating restaurants, a Mealshare sticker is placed beside select items on the menu. When customers buy one of these dishes, the same meal is later served to someone either in town at the Calgary Drop-In Centre, or across the world through the Children's Hunger Fund.

"It's a very simple idea: Buy one, get one," Hall said.

Mealshare recently expanded to an additional nine restaurants in Calgary, giving the program 11 partners in the city.

Dwayne Ernest, owner of Open Range, says the Mealshare commitment was a perfect fit for his Calgary restaurant. RILEY HILL/FOR METRO

"We've been so amazed by the growth and support, especially in Calgary," Hall said. "We've received some amazing support. People seem really happy about it."

Dwayne Ernest is the owner of Open Range, a restaurant that recently joined the program. He said the partnership was a natural fit.

"We already worked with the drop-in centre," Ernest said. "We hope the program works well with us."

RILEY HILL/FOR METRO

Roads. Latest snow-route parking ban the longest

Calgary experienced its longest snow-route parking ban in the three years since the seasonal prohibition was introduced.

City officials announced Thursday that motorists would once again be able to park freely once the ban was lifted at 6 a.m. Friday.

Spanning 45 hours, the latest ban surpassed the previous record set in January 2013 by nine hours.

"Calgary saw 24 centimetres with weather conditions significantly milder than this week's severe snowstorm," the city said in a news release.

Crews spent most of Thursday focusing on Priority 2 routes and were expected to complete the job by Friday morning.

But the plowing isn't over yet. Snow-clearing operations were expected to continue on residential routes throughout the weekend. Crews will also focus their efforts in some areas of the northwest and northeast, particularly in trouble spots with large snow drifts. METRO

Construction work is seen on Calgary's airport tunnel in this file photo. Mayor Naheed Nenshi is worried about how delays in finalizing the criteria for the federal Building Canada Fund will affect future infrastructure projects. METRO FILE

How will federal funds flow? Calgary still doesn't know

Clock is ticking.

Mayor fears construction season could be affected if Ottawa doesn't lay out how cities can qualify for infrastructure money

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Calgary risks seeing fewer construction projects next year if the federal government doesn't soon clarify how cities can qualify for billions of dollars in infrastructure funding promised in its 2013 budget, according to Mayor Naheed Nenshi.

"This is actually a big problem," Nenshi said Thursday. "When the federal government passed the last budget, they did so with a commitment that we wouldn't lose a construction season."

While the money for the new Building Canada Fund was announced as part of the federal budget last spring, the criteria for municipalities applying for pieces of that pie were to come later.

"The criteria were to be negotiated and in place so that we could start building next spring," Nenshi said. "Basically nothing has happened since the last budget and we're now in December, and if those criteria are not clear it'll be impossible for cities across the country to tender work for this construction season."

Coun. Brian Pincott, who serves as Calgary's representative to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, said he and other municipal leaders tried to pin down federal officials in Ottawa last week but all they got was "obfuscation" in return.

"The new program is the Building Canada Fund; the old program is the Building Canada Program," Pincott said. "So, every time we asked about the Building Canada Fund we were referred to the Building Canada Program."

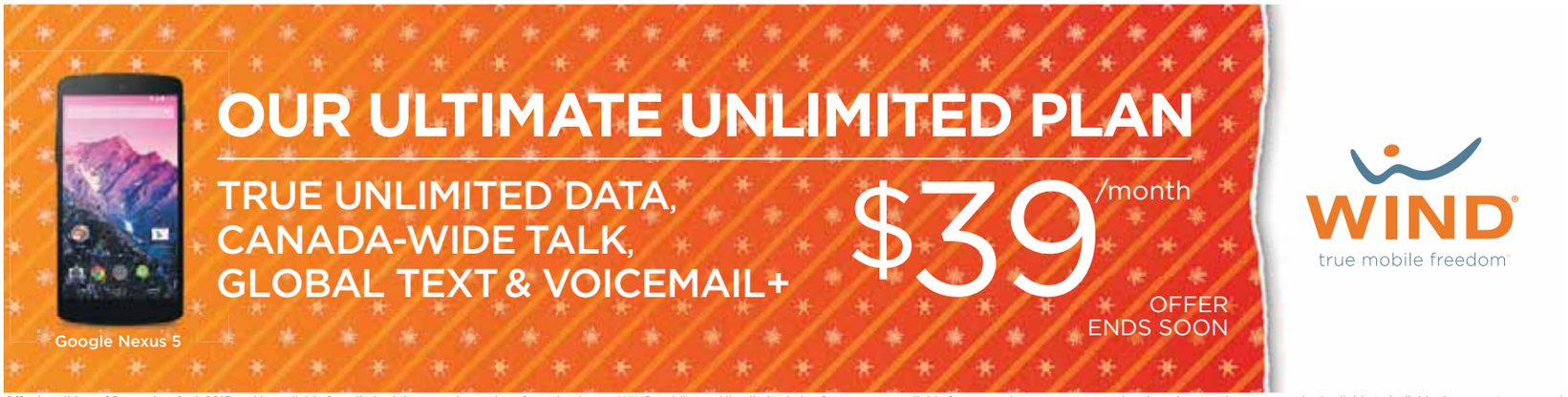
Nenshi said he's starting to get worried but has received assurances from Calgary Southeast MP Jason Kenney that the federal cabinet will approve the fund's criteria by the end of the calendar year, but that's still not the final step.

"They then have to do some negotiations with the province, so we need to make sure the province of Alberta is ready to go as well," Nenshi said. "There's still time but it's really tight."

Quoted

"Nothing would be in jeopardy because we have not budgeted for anything that we don't have the money for ... but if they can get the criteria in place, we can do much more in '14 than we normally would have been able to, but more importantly we can fill in (projects for) '15 and '16."

Mayor Naheed Nenshi on the need for the federal government to clarify the application criteria for its Building Canada Fund



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Larry Kerwan, the brewmaster from Village Brewery in Calgary. RILEY HILL/METRO

Province eases rules for small brewers

Even playing field. Small brewers no longer have to meet minimum production requirements

Nano-brewers rejoice!

The Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission loosened its rules to make it easier for small-time brewers to enter the business of beer.

Under new regulations, brewers are no longer required to meet minimum capacity standards to sell their product. In the past, breweries that couldn't produce 5,000 hectolitres a year were not allowed to sell their product.

Alberta Small Brewers Association executive director, Greg Zeschuk, said these changes will give brewing hobbyists the chance to prove their product in the market.

"For existing breweries, these changes really won't change much," Zeschuk said. "What it does do is give home brewers the chance to hit the big time."

Zeschuk believes this competition could change the drinking habits in our province.

"More good local breweries makes people think of local beer instead of something that comes out-of-country," he said.

The changes will also allow brewpubs to sell their beers in retail for the first time in Alberta.

"This especially will be a pretty big deal for them. It can really open-up their business," Zeshuk said.

Village Brewery brewmaster, Larry Kerwin, said he was pleased with the news, but added that he still sees room for improvement on the government's part.

"As Alberta brewers, we're pleased that the government is moving forward with some progressive changes," Kerwin said. "Of course, these aren't all the changes we would like, but it was still good to see."

RILEY HILL/METRO

Quoted

"What it does is give home brewers the chance to hit the big time"

Greg Zeschuck, Alberta Small Brewers Association

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Edmonton grizzly bear poacher given 5 months

An Edmonton man was sentenced to five months in jail and ordered to pay $10,000 in fines for shooting a sow grizzly and her cub.

Frank Kucher, 52, was convicted of five counts under the Wildlife Act, including two counts of hunting wildlife out of season, two counts of abandoning the carcasses, and one count of unlawful possession of wildlife in Hinton Provincial Court. He is prohibited from hunting for nine years.

"Alberta Justice and Solicitor General takes poaching seriously. This case highlights how Albertans can help protect our fish and wildlife resources by reporting suspicious hunting or fishing activity," said Minister of Justice and Solicitor General Jonathan Denis in a release.

It is against the law to hunt grizzly bears in Alberta as they are considered a threatened species.

The Edmonton District Fish and Wildlife Office received an anonymous tip from a person claiming to have seen the head of a grizzly bear in Kucher's garage back in 2010. Officers later found the carcasses of the sow and her cub along the Pembina River south of Robb.

STEPHANIE DUBOIS/METRO

Crime

Police investigate NE bank robbery

Police are investigating a bank robbery that took place in the city's northeast on Thursday morning.

Around 11:15 a.m., officers responded to a Scotiabank in the 800 block of 19 Street NE after a man handed a teller a note demanding money and made off with an undisclosed amount of cash. METRO

Money-related crimes

Man charged with breaching court order

RCMP arrested a Calgary man Thursday on two counts of breach of recognizance. Milow Brost is currently addressing numerous alleged money-related crimes in the courts and had been forbidden from soliciting investments without court approval. METRO

Out in the cold

Fire forces 80 from apartment

Eighty people were forced into the cold Thursday morning as fire crews responded to an apartment fire at the 300 block of Heritage Drive SE.

The blaze was quickly extinguished, according to a release. One person was transferred to hospital suffering from smoke inhalation. METRO

Union leaders say Premier Alison Redford has hurt labour relations in Alberta with two controversial bills having been passed this week. MARK BLINCH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Unions feel 'fooled' by Premier Redford

Coalition is 'dead.'
Head of Alberta Federation of Labour says bills' passage poisoned relations with province

The head of the Alberta Federation of Labour says the province has poisoned labour relations with the passage of two controversial bills.

Gil McGowan says his labour group urged its members to vote for Premier Alison Redford in the 2012 election, but won't do it again.

"The coalition that elected Alison Redford less than two years ago is dead," McGowan said Thursday.

"In the waning days of the last election campaign, thousands of public sector workers swung their support behind Alison Redford in an effort to keep the Wildrose party from power.

"Many of the unions affiliated with our federation were among those who took the bait when Redford reassured us that she was a Progressive Conservative with an emphasis on 'progressive.' But we will not be fooled again."

The Alberta Federation of Labour is an umbrella organization that speaks for 145,000 unionized workers in Alberta.

McGowan's comments came a day after Redford's government used its majority and its right to invoke a limit on debate to pass two bills less than a week after they were introduced without warning in the legislature.

Bill 46 strips away the right of binding arbitration for Alberta's largest public-sector union, the 22,000-member Alberta Union of Provincial Employees. The bill also imposes a four-year contract with frozen wages in the first two years, followed by one per cent hikes in each of the following two.

The bill returns the right of arbitration after this contract is settled and stipulates the imposed deal only kicks in if both sides can't reach an agreement by Jan. 31.

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First Nations student results 'not good at all'

Proactive measures.
New centre could improve early literacy

JEREMY NOLAIS
jeremy.nolais@metronews.ca

Redesigning and reopening a shuttered Calgary public school could go a long way to improving early literacy, high-school completion rates and other benchmarks for native students, says a top superintendent.

A report, issued by the Calgary Board of Education to trustees and made public this week, identifies that the board is still below provincial averages in a number of key areas, concerning First Nations, Metis and Inuit students, but is making strides.

In 2012, about one-third of self-identified native students graduated high school within the standard three-year timeline, less than one-quarter planned to transition to post-secondary even six years after entering Grade 10, and 10 per cent of students ages 14-18 dropped out altogether.

CBE Chief Supt. Naomi Johnson said her team met with Alberta Education officials to discuss the issue last week.

"I think that they acknowledge and we acknowledge that our results are, really, not good at all," she told trustees.

Even still, the board actually maintained or improved in every area monitored year-over-year and more help could be in sight.

The CBE has identified plans for an Aboriginal student centre at the currently closed Harold W. Riley school in Calgary's southeast as its top modernization priority.

Johnson said the location was chosen for its proximity to native student populations in the city, but added it would be able to accommodate young learners, possibly between the ages of 5-7, from all over the city.

School modernization

The provincial government has said it plans to green-light a number of school modernization projects in the province before year's end.

Alberta Education has also begun discussions about bringing on an Aboriginal designer to give the building an authentic feel, she said, adding that building solid reading skills at an early age would be a primary focus.

"The ability to speak in their own language is compromised — they're very much like English-language learners in many ways," she said of native students.

Mount Royal University professor Kevin O'Connor, who has a Ph.D in education and served previously as a senior policy adviser on Aboriginal education issues for the federal government, said the current school system teaches kids to read until Grade 2 or 3 and then shifts to a "read-to-learn" approach.

"Anybody who struggles with reading after Grade 3, essentially, and we have seen this not only in Canada but internationally, they start to really fall behind and then fall into those cracks," he said.

"The system's set up to serve the mainstream of students and because of the lack of resources and funding, it's really hard for teachers to address the needs of students if they don't know how to read and are struggling with literacy."

Students are seen walking past Harold W. Riley school, which is currently closed. The Calgary Board of Education hopes to turn the building into a centre focused on aiding young native students. METRO FILE

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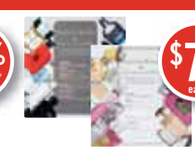

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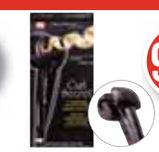

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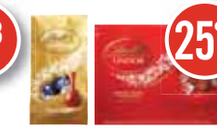

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Ottawa nurse Janique Gagnon helps vaccinate a child in the Central African Republic. CONTRIBUTED

Great suffering, enormous need

Médecins Sans Frontières. Conflict in the Central African Republic as awful as higher-profile crises, says Canadian nurse

DENIS ARMSTRONG
For Metro in Ottawa

Janique Gagnon, centre, with a group of women in the Central African Republic, at an outreach vaccination day. CONTRIBUTED

Janique Gagnon returned from the Central African Republic on Oct. 8 "with a heavy heart."

The Ottawa children's hospital nurse had just spent the last six months on her first mission with Médecins Sans Frontières — Doctors Without Borders — in one of the most dangerous places on earth, and though she's glad to be home with her husband and two young sons, she wants to return to the war-torn nation as soon as possible.

"I knew there was a risk, so I made it a family decision," Gagnon says. "If my husband or boys don't want me to go, I won't. But they gave me their permission."

They gave their permission because, despite the obvious risks, Gagnon's family understood that front-line emergency work was in her blood.

Before nursing, Gagnon spent 10 years in the Canadian military, deployed in Italy as well as Bosnia-Herzegovina, where she treated casualties from Sarajevo while under fire. Gagnon retired from the military in 2001.

By then, she was looking for an opportunity to volunteer with MSF. The organization offered her the opportunity to run a 95-bed hospital in Boguila, Central African Republic — a jungle village 400 kilometres from the capital, Bangui. This was in April, only two weeks after a coup d'etat reduced the tribal country to civil war.

Without blinking an eye, Gagnon accepted on the spot — nevermind that Seleka rebels and government forces fought viciously in the jungle near the hospital compound.

John Ging, the UN's director of humanitarian operations, has described the country as "a tinderbox that can ignite into something very, very big and very, very bad. Half the country's population of 4.6 million need humanitarian aid. The scale of suffering is among the worst in the world, and it's getting worse."

"I knew the conditions were bad, but that is why I wanted to be there, where the need is the greatest," said Gagnon. "Which is why I joined MSF, because they go to those places where people need medical care the most, and that's usually a dangerous place."

Gagnon had arrived at the beginning of the rainy season when malaria was rampant. She treated the diseased, the dismembered and the dying, witnessing more human degradation than any person should ever see.

Thanks in part to her front-line military experience, she pushed through and focused on the job. She recalls the day she stood up to a Seleka colonel, ordering him to remove his gun prior to entering the hospital.

She remembers the day she cried for the baby that died in her arms.

"Conditions were hard, but the people were so grateful we were there, they didn't want us to leave," she recalls. "I have a huge amount of respect for the people who live there. They have nothing. They can't even take care of themselves because there's nothing."

Gagnon says what they need most are schools. "Education leads to change. It's a long process, but it has to begin now."

To donate to MSF, visit msf.ca.

Diplomats picked pockets of the poor: U.S. prosecutors

Dozens of current or former Russian diplomats and their spouses enjoyed luxury vacations and spent tens of thousands of dollars on concert tickets, fine clothing and helicopter rides as they lied about their incomes to get the U.S. government to pay their health-care bills with money meant for the poor, federal prosecutors said Thursday.

The diplomats were among 49 individuals charged in a complaint unsealed in federal court in Manhattan, though no arrests were made and only 11 of the diplomats and their spouses remained in the United States. The complaint said Medicaid, a health care program for the poor, lost about $1.5 million in the scheme since 2004.

"Diplomacy should be about extending hands, not picking pockets in the host country," U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara told a Manhattan news conference. He called it "shameful and systemic corruption."

Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said in remarks carried by the Interfax news agency that "we are bewildered by making the information about accusations of alleged tax and other offences by Russian embassy personnel available to the media."

"It's not clear why the relevant agencies have considered it possible to make these accusations public before discussing them through diplomatic channels," he said.

The complaint alleges that the defendants submitted fraudulent applications for medical benefits for pregnancies, births and care for young children. Federal prosecutors said the diplomats qualified for Medicaid benefits by underreporting their income, often by tens of thousands of dollars.

In court papers, FBI agent Jeremy Robertson said 58 of the 63 births attributed to Russian diplomats and their spouses in New York City between 2004 and 2013 were funded through Medicaid.

Meanwhile, the diplomats and their spouses spent tens of thousands of dollars on vacations, fancy watches, expensive jewelry and designer clothing at luxury retail stores including Bloomingdale's, Tiffany & Co., Jimmy Choo, Swarovski and others, the court papers said.

The complaint said they also spent tens of thousands of dollars on electronic merchandise at Apple Inc. stores and elsewhere. Authorities said they also bought concert tickets, robotic cleaning devices and chartered helicopters.

Charges in the criminal complaint included conspiracy to commit health-care fraud, conspiracy to steal government funds and make false statements relating to health-care matters.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No immunity for that

"Being a diplomat does not give you the right to commit health-care fraud."

George Venizelos, head of the FBI's New York office

Outcry over globalization

A protester shouts slogans against the World Trade Organization during a rally in Bali, Indonesia, Thursday. Indonesia is hosting the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference from Dec. 3- 6.

FIRDIA LISNAWATI/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Assembly law

Egyptian activists sentenced

Prosecutors on Thursday sent to trial two of the most prominent Egyptian activists involved in the 2011 uprising that brought down Hosni Mubarak, charging them with taking part in an "illegal" protest and allegedly assaulting policemen during demonstrations last month, judiciary officials said.

This is the first referral of activists to trial linked to the recently enacted protest or assembly law, which places draconian conditions on staging street demonstrations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syria

Journalist killed by opposition forces

Syrian opposition fighters killed an Iraqi freelance journalist in the rebel-held north of the country, the latest of dozens of reporters who have died in the country over the past three years, an activist group and an international media watchdog said Thursday.

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British soldier's death

'As if Allah had chosen him,' accused's trial hears

A man accused of murdering a British soldier on a London street says he attacked the first serviceman he spotted, saying "it was almost as if Allah had chosen him."

Michael Adebolajo told police in an interview played Thursday at his trial that he and his co-accused decided a soldier was "the most fair target because he joins the army with kind of an understanding that your life is at risk.... We sat in wait and it just so happened that he was the soldier that was spotted first," Adebolajo said in the police interview. Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale are accused of running Fusilier Lee Rigby down with a car before hacking him to death.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Libya

American killed while jogging

An American teacher was shot to death as he was jogging in Benghazi on Thursday, highlighting persistently tenuous security in the eastern Libyan city where the U.S. ambassador was killed last year.

There were no credible claims of responsibility, but suspicion is likely to fall on Islamic militants active in Benghazi. It came five days after al-Qaida's American spokesman called upon Libyans to attack U.S. interests everywhere as revenge for U.S. special forces snatching an al-Qaida suspect off the streets of Tripoli in October and whisking him out of the country. The victim taught chemistry at Benghazi's International School which follows a British curriculum.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paramedics load a victim into an ambulance after an attack in Sanaa, Yemen, on Thursday. YEMEN DEFENSE MINISTRY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brazen attack in Yemen

Sanaa. Dark day for U.S. ally, whose shoreline is close to vital oil-shipping lanes

The Yemen Defence Ministry came under attack Thursday from a suicide car bomber and heavily armed gunmen, killing 52 people and wounding 167, in a fierce battle in the heart of the capital, Sanaa.

Among the dead at the Defence Ministry complex, which also houses a military hospital, were soldiers and civilians, including seven foreigners — two Germans, two Vietnamese, two Filipinos and one Indian, according to the Supreme Security Commission.

Nobody immediately claimed responsibility for the two-stage assault, but suicide bombings and complex attacks are the hallmarks of al-Qaida.

The morning attack, the deadliest in Sanaa since May 2012, underlined the ability of insurgents to strike at the government as they exploit the instability that has plagued the country — a U.S. ally — for more than two years.

The U.S. considers Yemen's al-Qaida branch to be the most active in the world.

The government said all the militants who stormed the complex Thursday were killed. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ice floes float in Baffin Bay above the Arctic circle in 2008.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Scientists say global warming affects food chain in Far North

Scientists huddled in a sea ice camp on the Arctic Ocean have produced new evidence that climate change could be threatening the food web in the far North.

The researchers found that shrimp-like creatures eaten by everything from fish to whales are likely to react poorly to increasingly acidic water caused by high levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

Their study explores the effect of pH levels on different types of the tiny crustaceans called copepods. They found some stayed at one depth, while others moved up and down, which exposed them to different pH levels. The levels are a measure of acidity or alkalinity. The lower the pH, the more acidic a substance.

They took samples of copepods and exposed them to sea water in which the acidity had been increased to levels expected in about 100 years.

"We're putting animals in a time machine and transporting them 100 years into the future," said lead author Ceri Lewis. The copepods who stayed at one depth didn't do well at all.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A woman stands in front of a huge wave on the seafront, in Rhyl, Wales, Thursday.
PETER BYRNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Powerful stirs up

High winds. German authorities reported flooding on the North Sea islands; The Netherlands anticipated three-metre high tide

Lives claimed

- An accident west of Edinburgh claimed the life a truck driver and a falling tree killed a man in Nottinghamshire.
- Police in western Denmark said a 72-year-old woman died when the van she was in was knocked over in the storm.

Britain braced for severe flooding and the worst tidal surge in 60 years after a powerful storm with hurricane-force gusts hit the country Thursday and began moving across Europe.

The storm prompted evacuations, snarled transport and left tens of thousands of homes without electricity. At least three people died in accidents linked to the weather.

About 10,000 homes along the eastern English coast were evacuated after Britain's Environment Agency warned the country could face its worst tidal surge in 60 years. The Thames Barrier — a series of huge metal plates that can be raised across the entire river — was being closed late Thursday to protect London from the surge.

Tidal floods — caused as the storm drives huge amounts of seawater toward the land — were expected in Britain, Germany and Scandinavia, together with freezing high winds from Greenland.

The Environment Agency put out more than 50 flood warnings for different parts of the U.K., with the risk of flooding stretching into Friday morning.

Rescue teams ferried residents affected by flooding in north Wales to safety by boat, while officials in other areas handed out sandbags and set up emergency shelters. The Defence Ministry said "a small number of personnel" had been drafted in to help local authorities deal with flooding in Norfolk.

The storm first plowed into Scotland overnight, slamming the highlands with gusts up to 229 kilometres per hour. Trains were

storm Europe

A woman and her dog are rescued by the Royal National Lifeboat Institute from floods as heavy seas and high tides sweep across the country, in Rhyl, Wales, Thursday. PETER BYRNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

suspended for much of Thursday, but began to run fitfully later as some routes were cleared of debris.

Transportation troubles, however, spread throughout northwestern Europe. All flights to and from Copenhagen's international airport were halted late Thursday due to the storm, officials said. It was not immediately clear how many passengers were affected or how long the airport — Scandinavia's largest — would stay closed.

Almost all flights to and from Hamburg airport in northern Germany were also cancelled, and federal authorities in Germany issued a warning for residents of Hamburg to expect a "very severe tidal flood."

Residents were urged to evacuate low-lying areas of the port and along the Elbe River.

The German Weather Service said the storm front, which was gathering strength as it headed eastward from the Atlantic Ocean off Greenland, would also bring polar air and some snow to Europe.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iran, Palestinian talks

U.S. extends support to Israel

Looking to soothe irritated relations with Israel, America's top diplomat on Thursday pledged to support the Jewish state's security throughout separate negotiations with Iran and the Palestinians — including Israel's demand that it "defend itself, by itself."

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry's comments served as a sort of peace offering to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has made no secret of his displeasure with a tentative offer by world powers to ease some sanctions on Iran in exchange for curbing Tehran's nuclear program. In remarks to reporters after meeting with Netanyahu in Jerusalem, Kerry repeatedly affirmed Israel's security as a top U.S. priority.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Snowden leak

Swedish spy agency supplies Russian info to NSA: Docs

Sweden's public broadcaster says it has obtained secret documents leaked by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden suggesting a Swedish spy agency has been a key supplier of intelligence on Russian leaders to the NSA.

Broadcaster SVT on Thursday published brief excerpts from the documents saying Sweden's FRA agency provided the NSA with a "unique collection on high-priority Russian targets, such as leadership, internal politics."

Many countries have demanded explanations from Washington regarding U.S. surveillance activities. Swedish officials said they are more concerned about surveillance from other countries. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Brother of dead soldier speaks out

A matter of life and death. Help with post-traumatic stress desperately needed for those in the military, Kevin McNeil says

The younger brother of a soldier whose death has raised questions about the Canadian military's treatment of those with post-traumatic stress disorder says members of the military need to know help is available if they are suffering.

Speaking before Warrant Officer Michael McNeil's funeral Thursday, Kevin McNeil said PTSD is a problem that is not going to stop, but the risks can be minimized.

"The most we can do is maybe slow it down," McNeil said outside the armoury in Truro, N.S.

"As much money as government is going to pour into this, it's not going to stop. What we can do is make more people aware, talk to these soldiers, let them know their jobs aren't in jeopardy and we're here for them."

McNeil's death at Canadian Forces Base Petawawa, northwest of Ottawa, is among four recent suicides in the military.

The Armed Forces acknowledges it will be dealing with an increased number of PTSD cases in the next decade as the stress of combat takes hold in those who have returned from the fighting in Afghanistan.

McNeil, 39, was a member 3rd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment.

McNeil said he wants his brother remembered as a family man first and secondly as a hero to his country.

McNeil's coffin was carried into the armoury by an honour guard made up of McNeil's comrades in the Royal Canadian Regiment, assisted by his brother Kevin and cousin Tim McNeil.

Quoted

"He gave everything to his country. He was a strong man and will be missed forever."

Kevin McNeil, brother of Warrant Officer Michael McNeil

During the funeral service, Lt. Kendra Mellish, the widow of Warrant Officer Frank Mellish, a soldier killed in Afghanistan in September 2006, gave a reflection on her friend.

She said after her husband died, McNeil helped care for her children and would meet her when he came back from tours.

"Only seven short years ago, he was in this same position, paying homage to his friend (Frank)," she said.

She offered comfort to McNeil's two daughters, one son and one stepson.

"Be proud of the hero he was," she said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Members of The Royal Canadian Regiment carry the casket at the funeral for Warrant Office Michael McNeil at the Truro Armouries in Truro, N.S., on Thursday. ANDREW VAUGHAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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C-section forced on mentally ill woman by a British court

U.K. Risk of her womb rupturing in delivery; court approved use of 'reasonable restraint' for the surgery

A newly released court judgment says that doctors were medically justified in forcing an Italian woman to have a cesarean section last year because it was in her best interests.

At a hearing of Britain's Court of Protection in August 2012, Justice Nicholas Mostyn declared doctors should be allowed to force Alessandra Pacchieri, 35, to have a C-section because a natural delivery risked rupturing her womb.

There were also concerns that if Pacchieri was uncooperative when she went into labour, doctors would be unable to monitor the baby's heartbeat and to see whether Pacchieri's womb might rupture.

In his decision, Mostyn authorized the use of "reasonable restraint" to perform the C-section safely.

Pacchieri previously had two elective C-sections and suffered from "a significant mental disorder which is psychotic in nature," Mostyn wrote in his declaration. She had been detained in an east London hospital for several weeks before having the C-section.

The Court of Protection makes decisions for people deemed unable to decide for themselves.

It said the ruling was released because of public interest in the case.

Pacchieri is now contesting a British decision to put the child, a girl, up for adoption.

Pacchieri's name was disclosed in a press release by her lawyer Stefano Oliva, which said she will appeal against her baby's adoption.

At the hearing on forcing a C-section evidence was submitted from a psychiatrist detailing her psychotic episodes and delusional beliefs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"A predictable home could only be secured by way of adoption."

A British court ruled in February, although the mom "very much wished" to parent the baby girl, the ruling said.

Demo halted for Thai king

An anti-government protester holds a picture of Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej as prayers are said during a celebration of his 86th birthday at the democracy monument which protesters have been occupying in Bangkok. Protesters agreed to halt their activities to pay respect on the king's birthday. ED WRAY/GETTY IMAGES

Kawartha Lakes, Ont.

Mystery woman leaves 'uranium' with police; no ID

Police are looking for a woman who walked into a police station with a container labelled "85 per cent uranium."

Kawartha Lakes Police say she was asking for advice on how to dispose of it. Cops believe the material came from a Kirkland Lake mine where her grandfather worked.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Social media plea

Lost suitcase with gifts returned

A Regina woman who lost her suitcase on the highway is no longer singing the blues. Trina Owens reached out on social media and Kijiji after her suitcase fell off a truck. It was full of Christmas presents from a U.S. trip. Her plea paid off when the case was returned.

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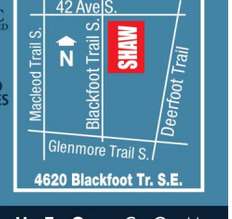

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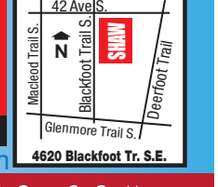

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An ‘outright lie’: Ford denies he offered $5K and a car for video

Wiretap revelations. Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly calls new allegations ‘troubling’

Toronto Mayor Rob Ford uses a security guard as a shield amid a throng of media at Toronto City Hall on Thursday. CHRIS YOUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Allegations that Rob Ford offered purported gang members money and a car in exchange for a video are an “outright lie,” the Toronto mayor said Thursday amid new questions about why police did not arrest him.

Speaking on an American radio station, the scandal-plagued mayor quickly tried to change the topic when asked about the latest claims against him.

“You can talk to my lawyers about it,” Ford told The Sports Junkies, a morning show based in Washington, D.C.

“I’m here to talk football, guys. So if you want to talk football, talk football; but if you want to talk about other things, then unfortunately I’m going to have to let you go.”

The latest allegations, which have not been proven in court, are contained in wiretap summaries put together as part of a guns and gangs investigation that were in a police document released Wednesday.

The intercepts reveal men talking with familiarity about the mayor, and suggest they had supplied him with drugs and plotted to blackmail him with photographs of him doing narcotics, police said.

Ford said nothing on arrival at city hall Thursday but Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly said the latest allegations would not affect city business.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Councillors want answers

Why wasn’t he arrested?

Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly has called the latest allegations against Ford troubling.

Some city councillors called on investigators to explain why they did not arrest the mayor, but police have consistently said they didn’t have sufficient evidence to do so and Ford’s status as mayor had nothing to do with it.

Investigators have asked to interview Ford, but he has refused on the advice of his lawyer, Dennis Morris, who called the latest allegations baseless.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Woman live-tweets spouse’s death

A Washington state woman who regularly monitors police-scanner traffic unknowingly live-tweeted about her husband’s death in a freeway crash.

In a series of gut-wrenching tweets on Wednesday, the Vancouver, Wash., mother first tweeted how horrible it was when she learned someone had died on Interstate 205 near the Oregon border.

Caran Johnson then tweeted that she was trying not to panic because her husband, who drives the freeway, wasn’t picking up his phone and was late getting home.

“i’m a basketcase,” she tweeted.

As the events unfolded, she messaged Washington State Patrol spokesman Will Finn directly, asking whether he had descriptions of the vehicles involved in the crash. Finn said he didn’t, but it struck him as odd so he began looking into the crash.

“I contacted the investigator and we put two and two together. I realized I had a situation on my hands,” Finn said.

Troopers later went to Johnson’s home to tell her that her husband, 47-year-old Craig Johnson, had died in the collision. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crews respond to an accident in Vancouver, Wash., Wednesday. Caran Johnson’s husband died in the crash. ZACHARY KAUFMAN/THE COLUMBIAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sen. Mike Duffy arrives at the Senate on Parliament Hill in October. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Liberal senators switch tactics

Senate scandal.
Liberals could get another shot to call on two witnesses involved in audit interference

Liberal senators tried a new tactic Thursday to get to the bottom of allegations that the Prime Minister's Office interfered in an independent audit of Mike Duffy's expenses.

James Cowan, Liberal leader in the Senate, asked Senate Speaker Noel Kinsella to rule that the interference, on its face, constitutes a breach of senators' privileges.

Kinsella reserved judgment.

If Kinsella determines there was a breach of privilege, the matter would be referred to a Senate committee for further study.

That could give Liberals another opportunity to try to call two key witnesses alleged to have been involved in the audit interference: Conservative Sen. Irving Gerstein and Deloitte managing partner Michael Runia.

Two previous Liberal attempts to get Runia to testify at the Senate's internal economy committee were defeated by the Conservatives, who hold a majority in the upper house.

And Gerstein ruled out of order Wednesday a Liberal attempt to have him step aside as chairman of the Senate banking committee until he's cleared by the RCMP or agrees to testify at internal economy about his role in the matter.

Cowan said he was forced to raise a question of privilege on the matter because "all other reasonable avenues of redress have been blocked."

According to witness statements and emails obtained by the RCMP and filed in court, Prime Minister Stephen Harper's former chief of staff, Nigel Wright, enlisted Gerstein's help in concocting a deal in which Duffy would repay $90,000 in questionable living expense claims.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

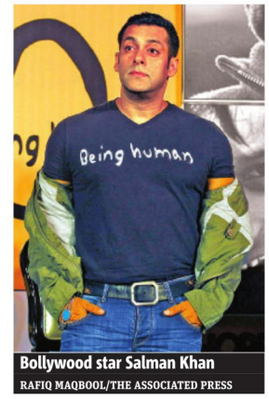
Homicide charge. Deadly incident comes back to haunt Bollywood star

Indian movie star Salman Khan will face a fresh trial on a homicide charge for a fatal road accident more than 11 years ago.

Police said that Khan drove his car into a group of people sleeping on a Mumbai sidewalk in September 2002, killing one and injuring four.

The actor was on trial for a lesser offence of causing death by negligence, which carries a maximum penalty of two years in prison.

However, after a magistrate in Mumbai heard the evidence, he invoked the more serious charge of culpable homicide not amounting to murder against the actor in February.



Bollywood star Salman Khan
RAFIQ MAQBOOL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Khan could face up to 10 years in prison if convicted of culpable homicide. He also faces charges of negligent driving and causing grievous hurt to the victims.

Khan has pleaded not guilty to the charges and sought a fresh trial, which Judge D. W. Deshpande granted Thursday.

The judge said that all the witnesses would be re-examined.

The pretrial is set for Dec. 23.

"These are far more serious charges, so there should be a fair opportunity (for Khan) to defend himself," his lawyer, Shrikant Shivade, said.

Khan, one of Bollywood's most popular stars, has acted in about 90 Hindi-language films in his 25-year career.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Growing optimism. Whales stranded near coast move to deeper water

Pods of 35 pilot whales have been moving into deeper water off Florida's southwest coast, raising optimism that the strandings may soon end.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration fisheries official Blair Mase said Thursday the three pods were located 14 and a half kilometres north of their original location and moving offshore. They were in 3.6 metres of water at mid-afternoon.

Mase says anything can still happen, but officials think the whales have a chance to reach their normal deep-ocean range.

She also says 11 whales are dead and five are unaccounted for.

The large group of whales was first spotted Tuesday in very shallow water in Everglades National Park.

Those that died are being studied because they beached themselves.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

British Columbia

B.C. program shows doctors the money

A $100,000 cash incentive has attracted nine new doctors to take on jobs in rural B.C. It's part of a program developed by the provincial government and the British Columbia Medical Association to get physicians to work in remote areas in the province. The doctors will be serving in Terrace, Chetwynd, Bella Coola, Hazelton, Clearwater, Princeton, Nakusp and Port Hardy for three years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CAN-132043_1312_CALMET

Sex scandals. Pope sets up commission to advise church on child protection

Pope Francis responded Tuesday to complaints that he has largely ignored the clerical sex abuse scandal, agreeing to assemble a panel of experts to advise the Holy See on protecting children from pedophiles and helping abuse victims heal.

Cardinal Sean O'Malley, the archbishop of Boston, announced the creation of the commission Thursday at the conclusion of a meeting between Francis and his eight cardinal advisers who are helping him govern the church and reform the Vatican bureaucracy.

O'Malley told reporters that the commission, made up of international lay and religious experts on sexual abuse, would study current programs to protect children, better screen priests, train church personnel and suggest new initiatives for both the Holy See to implement inside the Vatican City State and for bishops to implement around the world.

SNAP, the main U.S. victim's group, dismissed the initiative as useless and said the only thing that will protect children is if the church punishes negligent bishops and orders them to publicly disclose the names of molesters. "This simple step would immediately make kids safer," said David Clohessy, SNAP director.

Advocates for victims have long denounced the Vatican's refusal to sanction bishops who shielded abusive priests. That practice, coupled with the church's culture of secrecy and fear of scandal, enabled pedophiles to continue molesting children for decades while the Vatican turned a blind eye.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Non-believers

"...parents and parishioners are being offered yet another toothless church panel."

David Clohessy, director of SNAP, the main U.S. victims' group

Lions, tigers and liligers!

Six-month-old liliger cub Eva plays in the snow with her mother, Zita, in a zoo in Novosibirsk, Russia, Thursday. The cub's mother is a liger — half-lioness, half-tiger — and her father is a lion, Sam.

ILNAR SALAKHIEV/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Legion of Christ. Former priest Williams marries the mother of his child

Thomas Williams, formerly the public face of the disgraced Legion of Christ religious order who left the priesthood after admitting he fathered a child, is getting married this weekend to the child's mother, The Associated Press has learned.

The bride is the daughter of former U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, Mary Ann Glendon, one of Pope Francis' top advisers. Elizabeth Lev, the bride, is a Rome-based art historian and columnist for the Legion-run Zenit news agency, which Williams published for over a decade while he was in the order.

Williams admitted last year that he had fathered a child several years earlier. At the time Williams was the most publicly prominent priest in the 950-strong order. He is the author of books such as 2008's Knowing Right From Wrong: A Christian Guide to Conscience, and was a commentator for the U.S. broadcaster CBS.

Williams apologized for "this grave transgression" against his vows of celibacy and said he had stayed on as a priest because he hoped to move beyond "this sin in my past" to do good work for the church.

Williams left the priesthood in May to care for his son. He and Lev are due to marry on Saturday in the United States.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More to the story?

The wedding closes a circle of sorts, even as it raises some uncomfortable questions:

- Was Williams already in a relationship with Lev when she became a regular contributor to the magazine he published?
- Did family ties to Williams influence Glendon in her defence of the Legion and its disgraced founder despite credible reports that the founder was a pedophile?

Kenya

Venezuelan embassy diplomatic bag used to traffic drugs: Driver

Testifying Wednesday in the trial of a former diplomat charged in the killing of the acting Venezuelan ambassador, a driver at the embassy in Nairobi said the embassy's diplomatic bag was used to traffic drugs.

The embassy's former first secretary is charged with murder in the death of acting Ambassador Olga Fonseca, found strangled last year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Eastern Europe

Moldova's official language changed

Moldova's Constitutional Court ruled Thursday that the country's official language should be changed to Romanian from Moldovan.

Moldovans and Romanians speak the same language with slight variations. The language was renamed Moldovan under Soviet rule to separate the country from Romania.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Boss. Born to Run original lyric sheet sells at Sotheby's for $197,000

A handwritten, working lyric sheet for Bruce Springsteen's 1975 hit Born to Run sold for $197,000 US on Thursday at Sotheby's.

The document used to be in the collection of Springsteen's former manager, Mike Appel, according to Sotheby's. It did not reveal the identity of either the seller or the buyer, a person bidding by telephone.

Most of the lines in this rough 1974 version, written in Long Branch, N.J., are apparently unpublished and unrecorded, but the manuscript does include "a nearly perfected chorus," the auction house said.

The title track of Springsteen's 1975 album has revved up generations of fans — some of whom still refer to themselves as "tramps," as in the song.

Springsteen is known to scrawl his songwriting stream-of-consciousness-style in notebooks. There are also some notes in the margins — "wild" and "angels" and a word that looks like "velocity," with the letter T in Springsteen's curlicue cursive.

"Although Springsteen is known to have an intensive drafting process, few manuscripts of Born to Run are available, with the present example being one of only two identified that include the most famous lines in the song," Sotheby's said.

The Born to Run manuscript was included in a sale of fine books and manuscripts. It had a presale estimate of $70,000 to $100,000.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A page from the handwritten manuscript of Bruce Springsteen's 1975 hit Born to Run.

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Use bitcoin at your own risk, warns China's central bank

'Virtual goods.'
Country bars banks from handling the cybercurrency

Bitcoins suffered a new setback after China's central bank said Thursday its banks and payment systems are barred from handling the virtual currency.

The central bank said bitcoins did not qualify as a currency but private individuals still are allowed to trade them at their own risk.

Bitcoins are created, distributed, and authenticated independently of any bank or government. Their relative anonymity holds out the promise of being able to spend money across the Internet without scrutiny.

A customer pays for drinks at a pub using bitcoins earlier this year in Sydney, Australia, using a QR code on a smartphone. GETTY IMAGES

"Bitcoins are virtual goods that have no legal status or monetary equivalent and should not be used as currency," said a Chinese central bank statement.

It said financial institutions and payment systems were not allowed to use bitcoin prices for products and could not sell, trade or store bitcoins.

"Ordinary people are free to participate in transactions at their own risk," the central bank said.

Despite wild swings in value, the virtual currency has been moving toward broader acceptance. A growing number of companies accept bitcoins, which can be converted into cash.

Other governments are wary of the cybercurrency. In July, Thailand's central bank banned trading and use of bitcoins.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fast-food workers not lovin' their McSalaries

Fast-food workers rally for better wages outside a McDonald's restaurant in Chicago, Thursday. Demonstrations planned in 100 U.S. cities are part of push by labour unions, worker advocacy groups and Democrats to raise the federal minimum wage of $7.25 US. Protesters are calling for pay of $15 US an hour, but the figure is seen more as a rallying point. The push for higher pay faces an uphill battle. The industry competes aggressively on value offerings and companies have warned they would need to raise prices if wages were hiked. Most fast-food locations are owned and operated by franchisees, which lets companies such as McDonald's Corp. and Burger King Worldwide Inc. say they don't control worker pay. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baby steps

Twitter leans in, adds woman to board of directors

Twitter has named Marjorie Scardino as a director, adding a woman to the all-white male board for which it's been sharply criticized.

Scardino, 66, was the CEO of Pearson PLC, a publishing and education company, from 1997 to 2012, Twitter Inc. said in a filing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR
93.98¢ (+0.33¢)

TSX
13,200.40 (-104.52)

OIL
$97.38 US (+18¢)

GOLD
$1,231.90 US (-$15.30)

Natural gas: $4.14 US (+18¢)
Dow Jones: 15,821.51 (-68.26)

High EI rates padding fed's budget: Watchdog

The Harper government may need to depend on artificially high EI premiums, asset sales and spending restraint to balance the budget in time for the 2015 election, the federal budget watchdog says in a new report.

But the new assessment from the parliamentary budget office also projects that the government will be able to achieve its target of a balanced budget in 2015 and even amass a bigger surplus in the critical election year than the government projects.

The report says its baseline projection puts the 2015 budget surplus at $4.6 billion — almost $1 billion more than the official estimate contained in last month's economic update paper.

As well, the budget office projection shows next year's deficit at $3.5 billion — $2 billion lower than Ottawa's estimate in last month's economic update — and within an eyelash of a balanced budget, once a $3-billion cushion for surprises is factored out.

But the report shows that the improvement from the economic update is dependent not so much on a strong economy but on extraordinary measures and keeping payroll taxes higher than need be.

"If direct program expenses do not materialize as planned, if a governor-in-council decision is made to reduce EI premiums and if sales of public assets are delayed or do not occur, most, if not all, of the ... surplus the government projects for 2015-16 would be eliminated," the report said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Creative accounting

A big chunk of the 2015-16 and 2016-17 surpluses is based on the finance minister's stated intention to keep EI premiums frozen until 2016, the report states.

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LEATHER • V6
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CD-5009 • 32,000 KM
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D-3164A
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Saskatchewan's premier

PotashCorp cuts sacrifice workers for dividends: Wall

Premier Brad Wall has sent a letter to PotashCorp of Saskatchewan executives blasting them for cutting jobs while preserving the dividend paid to shareholders.

The Saskatoon-based company said Tuesday that it is laying off 1,045 people to reduce its workforce by about 18 per cent, with the biggest hits in its home province of Saskatchewan.

Wall's upset because PotashCorp CEO Bill Doyle said the fertilizer company's dividend is "sacrosanct" and won't be touched.

"This can only mean that the interests of shareholders were protected while the interests of employees here in Saskatchewan and elsewhere were sacrificed," Wall wrote in the letter. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chobani Greek yogurt

FDA, Idaho at odds over yogurt recall

A U.S. Food and Drug Administration report says the Idaho State Department of Agriculture detected abnormalities in yogurt at a Chobani facility two months before the company issued a recall, but state officials say that's not true.

Chobani told grocery stores in late August to destroy 35 varieties of yogurt reported to have been contaminated by a mould associated with dairy products. More than 300 people reported getting sick after eating Greek yogurt produced in Twin Falls, Idaho.

The FDA report says a state lab technician spotted visible defects and a yeast-like growth developing in samples pulled from the factory line in July. State officials deny the FDA's claim. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Calgary leading the country in home sales

BMO study. Cowtown had the strongest major housing sales in Canada, thanks to immigrants and youth lured west for work

Even though the housing market is showing renewed strength overall, there are underlying differences in valuations and outlooks among Canada's four major cities, according to a new report by the Bank of Montreal.

The study by BMO Economics found Calgary has the strongest major housing market thanks in part to a move west by immigrants and young Canadians, drawn by better job prospects, faster wage growth and healthier housing affordability than Vancouver and Toronto.

"Strong economic and population growth will encourage an upward trend in Calgary's house prices, though higher borrowing costs will moderate the gains," said Sal Guatieri, senior economist with the Bank of Montreal.

Sales in Toronto were up 20 per cent year over year, as new condo sales firmed after plunging last year.

Markets were for the most part balanced in the country's largest city, but bidding wars were still the norm in some areas where listings are scarce.

The report also found Vancouver, often seen as the market most at risk of a correction, was returning to balance, although prices remained largely unaffordable. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hot market

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In the three months to October, Calgary home sales have run 23 per cent above year-ago levels, nearly twice the national rate, although some slowing is likely in November.

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Stiff competition.
Intense grocery store wars mean lower food prices for consumers

The battle between Canada's food retailers is expected to make a winner out of shoppers next year.

Prices for dairy and egg products are expected to drop up to 1.5 per cent and other staples could see similar declines as the competition for Canadians' grocery dollars heats up, according to the Food Price Index.

The annual report by the University of Guelph predicts that general food expenditures will rise by 0.3 per cent to 2.6 per cent overall in 2014 — a "quite modest" increase, according to Sylvain Charlebois, lead author of the report.

Quoted

"There is a price war out there.... Retailers are desperate to maintain market share."

Sylvain Charlebois, lead author of the Food Price Index, an annual report by the University of Guelph

He said, "2012 and 2013 were decent years for consumers of lesser means, and we expect that to continue in the new year."

Target's arrival in Canada this spring "created a disturbance in the food-retailing force," said Charlebois, a Guelph, Ont., economics professor specializing in food distribution and policy.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Target's arrival in Canada leads to increased competition in the grocery-store sector, meaning lower prices for customers. BERNARD WEIL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

When skies are grey.
SolarCity to back up solar with Tesla car batteries

The solar panel installer SolarCity is beginning to address one of solar power's big drawbacks: The sun doesn't always shine.

The solution: Big battery packs that will provide backup power while lowering electric bills. The supplier: Electric car maker Tesla Motors, whose CEO Elon Musk is also the chairman of SolarCity.

"Our goal is to be an energy provider, to provide all energy services," said SolarCity CEO Lyndon Rive.

The batteries will be offered first to commercial customers because of the way many commercial electric bills are calculated. SolarCity is also conducting a pilot program in California for homeowners, but because residential bills are calculated differently — and the batteries are so expensive — it could be years before batteries make financial sense for homes.

"We know this is a long-term problem, so we are investing in it now," Rive said.

For power-hungry businesses battery backup can make financial sense even now. Many businesses are charged not just for the amount of electricity they use over a certain period, but also for the level of electricity they need from the grid at any one time. Think of a car owner paying for gasoline to run the engine, but also for the amount of horsepower needed when the car is loaded with people and climbing a steep hill.

Those horsepower charges, known in the industry as "demand charges" tend to ratchet up quickly. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$75M acquisition by rival

Sun Media waves white flag in battle for Quebec readers

Sun Media is ending a battle in Quebec with media rival Transcontinental by agreeing to sell its 74 publications and related websites for $75 million as it continues to adjust to a loss of advertising revenue caused by the digital revolution.

The agreement announced Thursday has been approved by the boards of both companies but the subsidiary of Quebecor Media will continue to operate the papers until the transaction receives regulatory approval, including from the Competition Bureau.

"Advertisers now have a multitude of platforms available to them that did not even exist little more than 10 years ago. We believe in the future of print media but we cannot ignore the new market realities," said Quebecor Media CEO Robert Depatie.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Freedom fighter, world icon

Analysis. Why Nelson Mandela was important to South Africa and the world

ELISABETH BRAW
Metro World News

Nelson Mandela's cell of five square metres in Robben Island, where he spent 18 of his 27 years in prison, is now a virtual shrine for tourists and political figures alike. But Mandela was much more than a long-suffering prisoner. He was a world leader and a 20th century icon.

"His building a future for South Africa was a huge achievement," says Stephen Chan, professor of international relations at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and author of numerous books on southern Africa.

"He helped draft what may be the world's best constitution. He was instrumental in establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was crucial in helping the country deal with its apartheid past. He was also a highly moral politician, setting the tone for the whole continent by stepping down after one term."

Lilias van Wyk, a white South African who lived through apartheid, is full of admiration for Mandela.

"There's nobody like him here in South Africa. (Our former president and Mandela's deputy president Thabo Mbeki) was a gentleman, but our current president is more interested in ladies than anything else," she tells Metro.

Indeed, Mandela succeeded where so many other freedom-fighters-turned-leaders have failed: as a democratic politician and later president, the former communist united his country.

Despite the black majority's pent-up anger over decades of discrimination, no civil war erupted. The transition to democracy under Mandela's leadership proceeded in a remarkably peaceful and orderly fashion. In his presidential inauguration speech, Mandela urged South Africans to practise forgiveness, saying in Afrikaans, "Wat is verby verby," which translates to "What is past is past." And, through the power of his moral leadership, Mandela brought South Africa back into the international fold.

Quote

"We all think he was a fantastic man. It's amazing what he accomplished without any violence or shooting. And his dignity! I say, 'Thank you, Lord, that we've had him.'"

Lilias van Wyk, a white South African who lived through apartheid

But, Africa watchers note, Mandela was no angel, inherently speaking.

"He became a saint because we made him one," says Chan. "We made him one to justify not putting enough pressure on the apartheid government to release him."

And though South African lore sees him as an old man who magically emerged from decades in prison to govern his country with great success, the reality is a bit more nuanced. Explains Chan: "The four years between his release and his election as president in 1994 were turbulent. He had to go on a steep learning curve."

And, while Mandela was in charge as president, he mainly provided the strategic direction and left the nitty-gritty of governing to his deputy, Thabo Mbeki. That's in no way negative, but the frail 76-year-old didn't single-handedly perform the arduous task of running the country.

Even after stepping down, Mandela remained an icon at home and around the world: almost uniquely among dissidents elected to political power, he left with his integrity and popularity intact. For South Africa, the African continent, even the world he was a desperately needed icon of democratic success.

"We're all praying for a peaceful transition now," says van Wyk. "We're on our knees 24-7."

But the adoration of Mandela will no doubt continue.

South Africa's first black president, Nelson Mandela, revisits his prison cell on Robben Island, where he spent 18 of his 27 years in prison, in 1994.
GETTY IMAGES

SOURCES: BBC, NOBELPRIZE.ORG, PBS, SABC
GRAPHIC: MIA KORAB; TEXT: ANTHONY JOHNSTON

5 THINGS WE'LL REMEMBER ABOUT MANDELA

1918-2013

1 FROM ROYALTY, LEGAL ACTIVISM TO "TERRORISM"
Nelson Mandela, raised by an African royal family in the Eastern Cape region of South Africa, studied law at university and opened the country's first black law firm at the age of 34. His zeal to fight apartheid led him to co-found an armed wing of the African National Congress, classified as a terrorist group at the time.

2 ROBBED OF LIBERTY, ON ROBBEN ISLAND
In 1964, Mandela was jailed for life for plotting to overthrow the government by sabotage. For 18 years of his sentence, he was interned at the infamous Robben Island prison in a tiny cell barely a few square metres in size. He was locked away, but not forgotten, as his power of resistance against apartheid spread from behind the bars to across the world.

3 MANDELA'S FREE AFTER MORE THAN A QUARTER OF A CENTURY
On February 11, 1990, clutching his wife Winnie's hand and dressed in a dignified brown suit, Mandela punches the air in a victory salute as he walks away from the gates of Victor Verster Prison. Mandela's freedom after 27 years in jail was one of the most iconic memories of the 20th century. Mandela was released following a relaxation of apartheid laws.

4 SOUTH AFRICA'S FIRST BLACK PRESIDENT ... AND OLDEST
In 1994, after more than 300 years of white rule, South Africa has its first black president after the country's first fully democratic election. At age 75, he became South Africa's oldest ever elected head of state.

5 BLACK AND WHITE UNITED, THROUGH SPORT
The following year, in another epic historic — and sporting — moment of the 20th century, Mandela presents the Rugby World Cup trophy to captain Francois Pienaar, an Afrikaner. Wearing a shirt of the South African rugby team (once reviled by the black population), Mandela's gesture was seen as a huge step of unity between blacks and whites.

1 visitor a year for 30 minutes was all Mandela was allowed to receive as a prisoner on Robben Island. He could write and receive one letter every half a year while interned there.

"If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."

Mandela on dealing with his opponents. He was lauded worldwide for working with those authorities that once persecuted him, rather than remaining embittered.

DID YOU KNOW?

MADIBA: Throughout his life, Mandela was affectionately and respectfully called Madiba, the name of the Xhosa-speaking Thembu tribal clan to which he belonged.

MASTER OF DISGUISE: Nicknamed "The Black Pimpernel" during his clashes with South African authorities because of his knack for avoiding the police using disguises his favourite one was a chauffeur.

KEEN CLASSICAL MUSIC FAN: Handel and Tchaikovsky were ranked among his favourite musicians.

A TASTE FOR THE SIMPLE: Mandela's favourite dishes included crumbled maize meal with sour milk, oxtail stew with vegetables and tripe — that's the stomach lining of animals.

MANDELA THE "TERRORIST": For years, Mandela was flagged on the United States' terror watch list due to his leadership in "terrorist" organization African National Congress against the old apartheid regime, and needed a waiver from the Secretary of State to travel to the US. In 2008, he was removed from the terror list.

metro
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Synopsis

"Well, it's Christmas time, pretty baby" ... and the Reel Guys are watching films... With our apologies to Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, who wrote those lyrics to Elvis Presley's Santa Claus is Back in Town — that song pretty much sums up what the holiday season means for us. Next week we'll be back to reviewing the big releases of the year, but before we get to that we thought we'd have a look at movies to get us in the Christmas spirit. They may not all be on Santa's nice list.

Billy Bob Thornton's Bad Santa is an antidote to all that icky holiday cheer. CONTRIBUTED

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

Santa's back in town

Festive features. The Reel Guys share their favourite holiday films, but not all of them bring comfort and joy

Richard: James Stewart stars in one of the movies that always puts me in the mood for Christmas, but its not the one you think. Sure, It's A Wonderful Life is a classic and yuletastic, but I also enjoy The Shop Around The Corner. It's a Christmassy romance that sees shop co-workers Stewart and Margaret Sullivan at one another's throats at work, unaware that they are also anonymously courting one another as pen pals. All becomes clear on Christmas Eve and they unwrap a big ol' gift basket of love. It's almost as heartwarming as a giant mug of hot chocolate.

Mark: Richard, as I'm Jewish, the Christmas holiday doesn't have quite the emotional pull on me that it might have on you. So, come Christmas Eve our family gathers around the TV, where we watch Bad Santa until we fall asleep from convulsive laughter. The story of an alcoholic, womanizing, foulmouthed Santa is a delightful antidote to all that icky cheer I'm supposed to feel. Then, when the novelty dies down, I get with the program and watch Elf. But I wear my Grinch mask just in case a tear is shed.

RC: That green synthetic fur is great for soaking up tears! But an antidote to the icky cheer you describe are two films set during the holidays without an ounce of tinsel treacle between them. In The Long Kiss Goodnight an amnesiac played by Geena Davis is outed as a former hired killer when she is recognized playing Mrs. Claus in a Christmas parade. The title A Christmas Tale sounds traditional enough, but the story focuses on the bitter rather than the sweet. The English title of this Catherine Deneuve dramedy could easily have been Cancer for Christmas, but despite the downer topic it's complex, funny and touching.

MB: I've never seen A Christmas Tale, Richard, thanks for the tip. But if it's holiday downers we're looking for, consider Black Christmas, a 1974 slasher flick starring Olivia Hussey. I guess you could double-bill this one with the 2006 remake, but that might be, ahem, overkill.

RC: Many years ago, on the first Christmas the PMC — my Preferred Movie Companion — and I spent together, I screened Black Christmas for her, which almost stopped the relationship before it had a chance to really get going. I love the slaying slasher story. Her, not so much. I quickly rebounded with National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation, which made the yuletide bright once again. Thanks, Chevy Chase, for saving Christmas and my relationship!

MB: Well, for a Jewish guy like me, I'll just have to be content with Adam Sandler's Hanukkah animation classic, Eight Crazy Nights, and a glass of Manischewitz!

Women rule at Sundance 2014

Lineup look-ahead. Comedy giants try their hand at more serious roles

Bill Hader and Kristen Wiig take a turn for the serious at Sundance in The Skeleton Twins. CONTRIBUTED

Ladies will continue to drive the feature lineup at the Sundance Film Festival as Robert Redford's independent-cinema fair celebrates its 30th anniversary next month in Park City, Utah.

At the top of the list released Wednesday, female directors dominate the competition, with eight out of the 16 films helmed by women. And in front of the camera, women reign supreme — only this time, comedians eclipse the layout.

Actresses like Amy Poehler, Kristen Wiig, Molly Shannon, Aubrey Plaza, Amy Sedaris and Jenny Slate all appear in features playing at the upcoming fest. And in the case of Wiig, Shannon and Plaza, we have funny gals turning serious.

Following her dramatic turn in the upcoming The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Wiig will play the twin sister of fellow SNL alum Bill Hader in The Skeleton Twins. In the film, which also stars Luke Wilson and Ty Burrell, the siblings coincidentally cheat death on the same day.

Shannon and Plaza will star in Life After Beth, which focuses on a mysterious second chance at love after death.

"Comedians are big this year, especially with what we are calling 'funny ladies,'" said Sundance director John Cooper. "A lot of these roles are setting up typical comedic actresses in roles that are a little deeper. In general, a lot of actors are being drawn to independent film because of the quality of interesting roles that they can play."

Sundance films typically offer the ideal fabric and draw for performers who are departing from their usual Hollywood formulas.

Girls sitcom creator Lena Dunham, whose debut movie, Tiny Furniture, won best narrative feature when it premiered at the South by Southwest film festival in 2010, will appear in writer/director Joe Swanberg's Happy Christmas, also starring Anna Kendrick.

In her first feature since The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 2, Kristen Stewart plays a guard stationed at Guantanamo Bay in budding writer/director Peter Sattler's Camp X-Ray.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

By the numbers

Altogether, 117 feature-length films, selected out of 12,218 titles submitted (72 more than for 2013), are scheduled for Sundance 2014. Some 37 countries and 54 first-time filmmakers will be represented.

Crime/Drama

Out of the Furnace

Director. Scott Cooper

Stars. Christian Bale, Casey Affleck

This movie is bleaker than the most mournful George Jones song. When steel mill worker Russell Baze (Christian Bale) emerges from jail, he finds his live-in girlfriend (Zoe Saldana) no longer lives in and his Iraq War vet brother Rodney (Casey Affleck) is having trouble with civilian life. When Rodney disappears after a bare-knuckle fight run by Harlan DeGroat (Woody Harrelson) Russell attempts vigilante justice. Bale and Affleck hand in intense performances but Harrelson shines as the best movie scuzzball in recent memory. It's a portrait of a hard life drawn in hard-edged detail.

RICHARD CROUSE

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Bob Odenkirk gets seriously funny

Nebraska. Comedian reunites with Will Forte for an Alexander Payne dramedy

MATT PRIGGE
Metro World News in New York

Nebraska opens on Friday. CONTRIBUTED

Along with David Cross, Bob Odenkirk is responsible for the sketch comedy landmark Mr. Show. But he's done plenty of drama — just the funny kind. His role as sleazy (but weirdly capable) lawyer Saul Goodman was one of the highlights of Breaking Bad. Nebraska reunites him with SNL favourite Will Forte, who he directed in The Brothers Solomon. But it's a serious comedy — a funny but moving study from Sideways's Alexander Payne of a family whose sons (Forte and Odenkirk) have to deal with an aging, stubborn, alcoholic father (Bruce Dern) who thinks he's won $1 million. (He hasn't.)

How did you get involved in a dramedy from a major filmmaker that reunites you with Will Forte?
I have auditioned for three of Alexander's films. I read for Sideways, and I read for About Schmidt, and I read for this. I love his work; I'm a huge fan. I felt very confident in playing Ross because I feel like I know him for a number of reasons — not the least because my father had an alcohol problem. My response to the whole experience was not unlike Ross's, which is anger and lack of forgiveness.

People make a big deal out of comics doing drama and vice versa. How do you feel about that?
I just look at the character and see if I can play him honestly — see if I can relate; see if I can understand where their energy comes from and what they're after. And that's all I concern myself with.

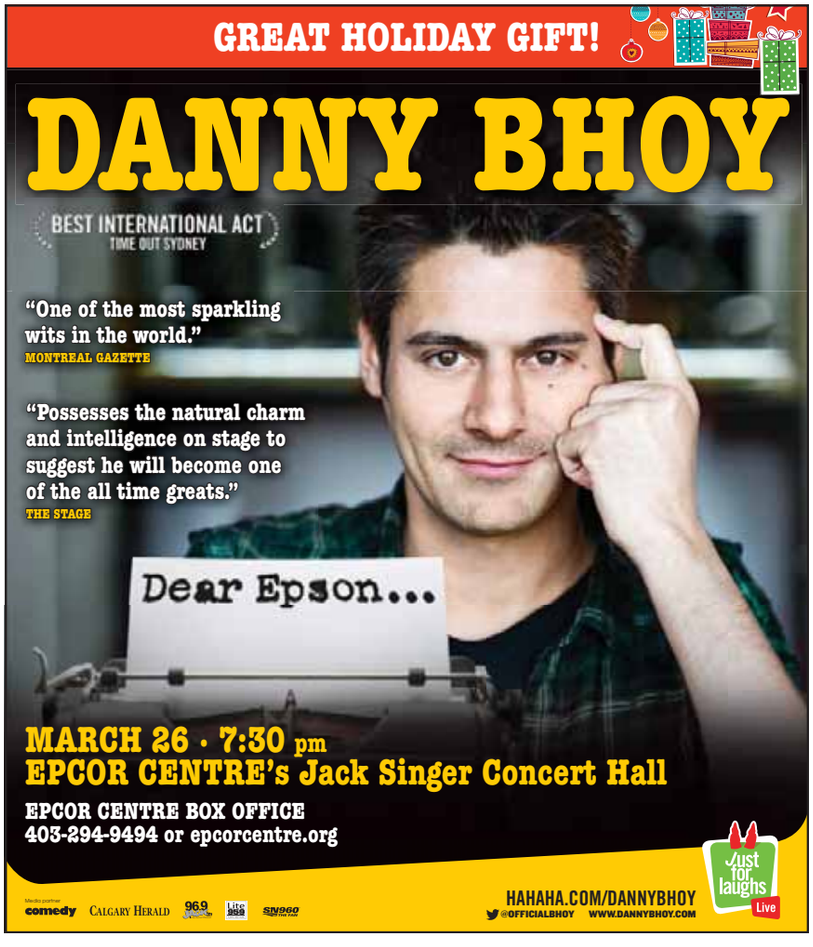
Is drama the same thing as comedy, generally speaking?
I probably have a harder time playing large on some of those sketch comedy stages that I perform on than I do playing smaller and internalizing. And by the way, Vince Gilligan gave me the role of Saul Goodman because of Mr. Show, not for anything else. I think there's probably a couple things on Mr. Show where you can see the kind of commitment and modulation that a dramatic performance needs to have.

Did you ask him which sketches inspired him casting you?
I didn't ask him. I never want to look too close in the gift horse's mouth. I'm just like, "Whatever you say, Vince. Thank you." Then I walk away. I don't want to ask why these lunatics give me these opportunities, but if they want to keep giving me wonderful chances, I'll take them.

Being a film director yourself, what is it like working with someone like Payne?
I keep saying how confident Alexander is. And that's something that's refreshing and that only makes you feel more secure and able to risk and try things. A lot of filmmakers and a lot of us making art, we're crossing our fingers behind our back, going, "Hope this works!" I think Alexander Payne is not crossing his fingers. He does the work in every side of his filmmaking. I heard he spent a year finding locations. He's done the hard work.

The good ol' college try

> "A lot of us who are making art, we're crossing our fingers behind our back, going, 'Hope this works.'"
> Bob Odenkirk



THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., DEC. 6 TO THURS., DEC. 12 TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Canyon Meadows Bay 110 13226 Macleod Trail

2 Guns (14A) Fri-Thu 9:50
About Time (14A) Fri-Thu 12:55-3:40-6:50-9:40
Blue Jasmine (PG) Fri-Thu 4:15-7:05-9:35
Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2 (G) Fri-Thu 1-3:55-6:55
The Counselor (14A) Fri-Thu 7-9:50
Despicable Me 2 (G) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:20-7:20 Wed 1:30-4:20 Thu 1:30-4:20-7:20
Elysium (14A) Fri-Thu 9:55
Enough Said (PG) Fri-Thu 1:10-3:50-7:15
Escape Plan (14A) Fri-Thu 12:50-4:10-6:50-9:40
Lee Daniels' The Butler (14A) Fri-Thu 1:05-4:05-6:45-9:35
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) Fri-Thu 1:15-3:45-7:10
Planes (G) Fri-Thu 1:25-4:10
The Polar Express (G) Sat 11
Prisoners (14A) Fri-Thu 9:20
Rush (14A) Fri-Thu 7-9:45
Scrooged (STC) Wed 7:30
The Smurfs 2 (G) Fri-Thu 12:45
Turbo (G) Fri-Thu 1:20-4
We're the Millers (14A) Fri-Thu 9:45

Crowfoot Crossing 91 Crowfoot Terrace

12 Years a Slave (14A) Fri 12:40-3:40-6:55-10 Sat-Sun 12:25-3:40-6:55-10 Mon-Wed 12:40-4-7-10 Thu 12:40-4-7
The Book Thief (PG) Fri 12:35-3:30-6:45-9:45 Sat-Sun 11:55-3:30-6:45-9:45 Mon-Thu 12:55-3:50-6:45-9:40
Delivery Man (PG) Fri 12:20-2:50-5:20-7:50-10:20 Sat-Sun 12-2:30-5:15-7:50-10:20 Mon-Thu 2:25-4:55-7:25-9:55
Ender's Game (PG) Fri-Sun 4:30-7:10-9:50 Mon-Tue 4:15-7:10-9:50 Wed-Thu 4:15-9:50
Free Birds (G) Fri 1:10 Sat-Sun 12:50 Mon-Thu 1:05
Frozen (G) Fri-Sun 1-3:55-6:35 Mon-Thu 12:45-3:30-6:30
Frozen 3D (G) Fri 1:45-4:55-7:30-10:05 Sat-Sun 11:45-2:20-4:55-7:30-10:05 Mon-Thu 2:10-5-7:35-10:10
Gravity 3D (PG) Fri 12:30-2:45-5:05-7:20-9:35 Sat 12:30-2:50-5:05-7:20-9:35 Sun 2:50-5:05-7:20-9:35 Mon-Wed 2-4:25-7:15-9:45 Thu 2-4:25-7:15
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes Thu 10-10:15
Holiday Inn (STC) Sun 12:45
Homefront (14A) Fri 12:25-2:55-5:25-8-10:30 Sat-Sun 12:15-2:40-5:25-8-10:30 Mon-Thu 2:20-5:10-7:55-10:20
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri 12:15-12:45-3:20-3:50-6:30-7-9:10-9:40-10:10 Sat-Sun 12:10-12:40-3:20-3:50-6:30-7-9:10-9:40-10:10 Mon-Tue 12:30-3:15-3:45-6:25-6:55-9:05-9:35-10:05 Wed 3:15-3:45-6:25-6:55-9:05-9:35-10:05 Thu 12:30-3:15-3:45-6:25-6:55-9:05-9:35-10:05 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Out of the Furnace (14A) Fri-Sun 1:55-4:40-7:35-10:25 Mon-Tue 1:55-4:45-7:45-10:25 Wed 4:45-7:45-10:25 Thu 1:55-4:45-7:10-10:25 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
The Polar Express (G) Sat 11
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Thu 7:30
Thor: The Dark World (PG) Fri 2:05 Sat-Sun 11:10-2:05 Mon-Thu 1:45

The Hunger Games: Catching Fire. CONTRIBUTED

Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 4:50-7:45-10:35 Mon-Thu 4:35-7:30-10:15

Eau Claire Market 200 Barlay Parade

Blue Is the Warmest Color (R) Fri 5:30-9:20 Sat-Sun 1:10-5:30-9:20 Mon-Thu 7:50
The Book Thief (PG) Fri 6:40-9:50 Sat-Sun 12:50-3:45-6:40-9:50 Mon-Thu 5:45-8:40
Dallas Buyers Club (18A) Fri 7:20-10:05 Sat-Sun 12:40-3:30-7:20-10:05 Mon-Thu 6:10-8:50
Gravity 3D (PG) Fri 7:10-9:30 Sat-Sun 1-3:20-7:10-9:30 Mon-Wed 5:55-8:10 Thu 5:45
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes Thu 10
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri 6:50-10 Sat-Sun 12:30-3:40-6:50-10 Mon-Thu 5:20-8:30
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Fri 7-9:40 Sat-Sun 1:20-4-7-9:40 Mon-Tue 5:35-8:20 Wed 5:20 Thu 5:35

Landmark Cinemas 16 Country Hills 388 Country Hills Blvd.

12 Years a Slave (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:05-3:20-6:40-9:55 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Tue 3:20-6:40-9:55 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 3:20-6:40 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3-6
The Best Man Holiday (14A) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12-3-6:30-9:50 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Wed 3-6:30-9:50 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3-6:30
The Book Thief (PG) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-

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Sun 12:10-3:30-6:45-9:50 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:30-6:45-9:50
Bullett Raja (14A) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, Sub-Titled Fri-Sun 12:50-6:05-9:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, Sub-Titled Mon-Thu 6:05-9:15
Delivery Man (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 1-4:05-6:50-9:30 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Mon-Thu 4:05-6:50-9:30
Frozen (G) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:50-3:40-7 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:40-7
Frozen 3D (G) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:10-3:05-6:30-9:25 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:05-6:30-9:25
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 10
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug: An IMAX 3D Experience (STC) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 10
Homefront (14A) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:45-3:40-7:05-10:10 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:40-7:05-10:10
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri 12:30-1:15-3-6:10-6:30-6:55-9:40-10-10:15 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Sat 12:30-1:20-3-6:10-6:30-6:55-9:40-10-10:15 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Sun 12:30-1:15-3-6:10-6:30-6:55-9:40-10-10:15 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Tue 3-6:10-6:30-6:55-9:40-10-10:15 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Wed 3-3:20-6:30-6:55-9:40-10-10:15 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 3-3:20-6:30-6:40-6:55-9:55-10:15
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire — The IMAX Experience (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 12-3:15-6:45-10:10 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Mon-Tue 3:15-6:45-10:10 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Wed 3:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Thu 3-6:25
Oldboy (18A) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 10
Out of the Furnace (14A) No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:20-3:30-6:40-9:55 No Passes, SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 3:30-6:40-9:55
Philomena (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Fri-Sun 12:20-3:05-6:15-9:05 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating, No Passes Mon-Thu 3:05-6:15-9:05
R... Rajkumar (STC) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 1:20-6-9:35 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Thu 6-9:35
Thor: The Dark World (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12:35-10:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Mon-Wed 10:15
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 4:15-7:15 SR Dolby Digital, Stadium Seating Thu 4:15-7:15-10:15

Landmark Cinemas 10

Shawnessy & EXTRA Calgarytudio 100-16061 MacLeod Trail

The Book Thief (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 11:45-3-6:15-9:30
Delivery Man (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Tue 1-4:45-7:45-10:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Wed 1-10:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Thu 1-4:45-7:45-10:30
Frozen (G) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:45-3:45-7
Frozen 3D (G) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:15-4:15-7:30-10:20
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Thu 10:15 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Thu 10
Homefront (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:45-4:40-7:15-9:50
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Sun 12-12:30-4-4:30-8-8:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Mon 12-12:30-4:30-8:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Tue 12-12:30-4-4:30-8-8:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Wed 12-12:30-4:30-8:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Thu 12-12:30-4-4:30-8-8:30 Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 3:15-6:45-10:15-11:30
Jackass Presents: Bad Grandpa (14A) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Wed 10
Philomena (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 1:30-3:50-6:20-9:20
Thor: The Dark World (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 12:15
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Digital Presentation, Stadium Seating Fri-Thu 3:30-6:30-9:40

Scotiabank Chinook 6455 MacLeod Trail

12 Years a Slave (14A) Fri-Tue 12:45-4-7:10-10:20 Wed 12:45-4-7:10 Thu 12:40-4-7:10-10:20
The Book Thief (PG) Fri-Wed 12:20-3:30-6:35-9:55 Thu 4:25-7:35-10:40
Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Delivery Man (PG) Fri 1:40-4:20-7:05-9:45 Sat-Sun 11:05-1:40-4:20-7:05-9:45 Mon-Thu 1:40-4:20-7:05-9:45
Die Hard (14A) Mon 2 Wed 9:30
Ender's Game (PG) Fri 2:15-5-7:45-10:30 Sat-Sun 11:20-2:15-5-7:45-10:30 Mon 1:30-4:20-10:30 Tue 2:15-5-7:45-10:30 Wed 12-2:40-10:30 Thu 2:15-5-7:45-10:30
Frozen (G) Fri 1:30-4:05-6:45 Sat 10:50-1:35-4:15-6:50 Sun 11-1:35-4:15-6:50 Mon-Wed 1:30-4:05-6:45 Thu 4:05-6:45
Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
Frozen 3D (G) Fri 12-2:35-5:15-7:50-10:25 Sat 11:30-2:20-5:15-7:50-10:25 Sun-Thu 12-2:35-5:15-7:50-10:25
Gravity 3D (PG) Fri-Thu 12:05-2:25-4:45-7:15-9:50
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes Thu 10:30 No Passes Thu 10:15
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug: An IMAX 3D Experience (STC) No Passes Thu 10
Holiday Inn (STC) Sun 12:45
Homefront (14A) Fri-Thu 12:40-3:10-5:45-8:20-10:50
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri 2-5:15-8:30 Sat-Sun 11:30-2:45-6-9:10 Mon-Tue 2-5:15-8:30 Wed 12:15-3:30 Thu 2-5:15-8:30 Fri 2:45-6-9:10 Sat 10:30-1:45-5-8:15 Sun 1:45-5-8:15 Mon-Wed 2:45-6-9:10 Thu 12:25-3:45-7 Fri-Sun 12-3:15-6:30-9:45 Mon 12-3:15-10:25 Tue-Thu 12-3:15-6:30-9:45
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire — The IMAX Experience (PG) Fri-Tue 12:30-3:45-7-10:15 Wed 12:25-3:45-7-10:15 Thu 12:15-3:30-6:45
Jackass Presents: Bad Grandpa (14A) Fri 1-3:20-5:40-8-10:35 Sat 5:40-8-10:35 Sun 3:20-5:40-8-10:35 Mon-Wed 1-3:20-5:40-8-10:35 Thu 12-2:20-4:40
The Metropolitan Opera: Tosca - Encore (STC) Sat 10:55
Oldboy (18A) Fri-Thu 12:15-2:50-5:30-8:10-10:50
Out of the Furnace (14A) Fri 2-4:50-7:40-10:40 Sat-Sun 11:10-2-4:50-7:40-10:40 Mon-Tue 2-4:50-7:40-10:40 Wed 1:05-3:50-6:50-10:40 Thu 1:35-4:50-7:40-10:40
Philomena (PG) Fri-Thu 12:10-2:35-5-7:35-10:10
The Polar Express (G) Sat 11
Puella Magi Madoka Magica the Movie: Rebellion (PG) Mon 7:30
Royal Opera House: The Nutcracker (STC) Thu 7:30
Thor: The Dark World (PG) Fri 1:25-9:40 Sat 2:15-9:40 Sun 11:30-9:40 Mon-Wed 1:25-9:40 Thu 1:25
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Fri 4:15-7:20-10:25 Sat 5-7:40-10:30 Sun 2:15-5-7:40-10:30 Mon-Thu 4:15-7:20-10:25

Plaza Theatre 1133 Kensington Rd. N.W.

Captain Phillips (PG) Fri-Tue 6:50-9:15 Thu 6:50-9:15
No Films Showing Today (STC) Wed

Sunridge Spectrum 2555 32nd Street

The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes Thu 10
The Polar Express (G) Sat 11

Westhills 10 165 Stewart Green

The Book Thief (PG) Fri-Sun 1-4:05-7:05-10:05 Mon-Thu 5:50-8:55
Dallas Buyers Club (18A) Fri-Sun 1:10-4:15-7:10-10 Mon-Thu 5:40-8:30
Delivery Man (PG) Fri-Sun 12:50-3:35-6:50-10:10 Mon-Thu 6:10-8:50
Frozen (G) Fri-Sun 12:15-3-6:45 Mon-Thu 6
Frozen 3D (G) Fri-Sun 12:45-3:30-7:15-9:50 Mon-Thu 5:30-8:15
Gravity 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 12:55-3:25-7:20-9:55 Mon-Tue 5:30-8 Wed 5:30 Thu 7:30
The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug 3D (STC) No Passes Thu 10
The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (PG) Fri-Sun 12-12:30-3:15-3:45-6:30-7-9:45-10:15 Mon-Thu 5:35-7:40-8:50
Last Vegas (PG) Fri-Sun 9:35 Mon-Wed 8:35
Philomena (PG) Fri-Sun 12:25-3:20-6:55-9:30 Mon-Tue 5:45-8:40 Wed 8:40 Thu 5:45-8:40
Thor: The Dark World (PG) Fri-Sun 12:40-4:10
Thor: The Dark World 3D (PG) Fri-Sun 7:25-10:20 Mon-Thu 6:10-9

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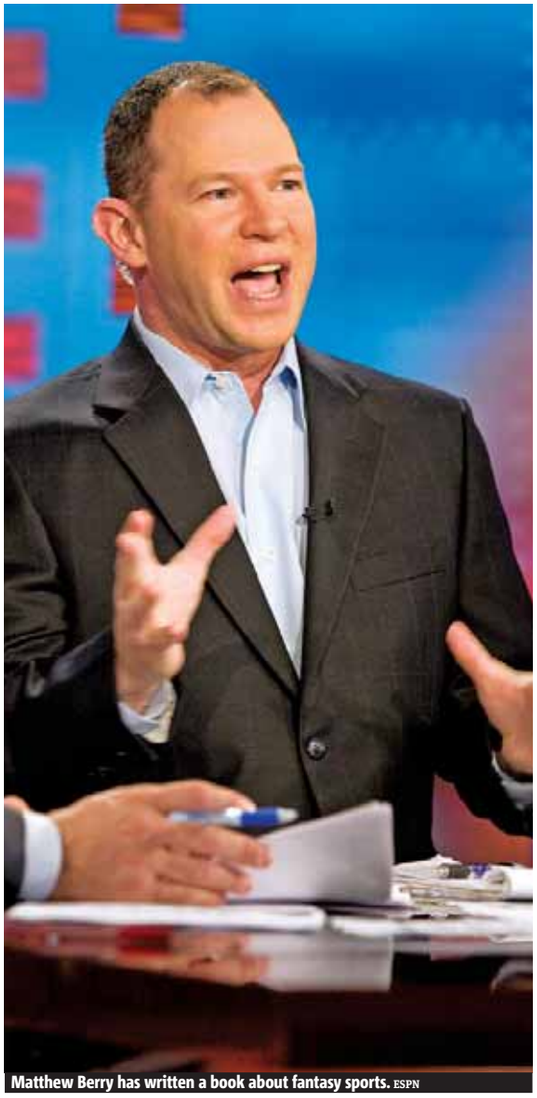
Our fascination with fantasy sports is Berry real and growing


Matthew Berry has written a book about fantasy sports. ESPN

New book. Guru on this going craze Matthew Berry says that experiencing fantasy sports is like 'going to your first Bruce Springsteen' gig

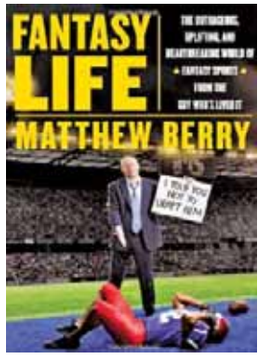
JONATHAN DONALDSON
Metro World News in NYC

At first glance, America's growing interest in fantasy sports may just seem like an expansion of what it means to be a fan.

If cheering for your favorite team and watching your favorite highlight programs isn't enough to sate your fandom, you can join any one of millions of online fantasy leagues, where you can draft your favourite players from across the league and make their triumphs (and failures) count for you.

But according to fantasy-guru Matthew Berry's new book Fantasy Life: The Outrageous, Uplifting, and Heartbreaking World of Fantasy Sports from the Guy Who's Lived It, it's not just "geeks in black shirts in their mom's basement" playing in fantasy sports leagues anymore — it's 13 per cent of the American population and growing. To what does he attribute this increasing fascination?

"Ultimately it's about fun and friendship," says the ESPN senior fantasy sports analyst (he would know — the 43-year-old is still playing in the same league he joined as a teenager). Moreover, he says it's something that has to be experienced to be truly understood.



"It's like going to your first Bruce Springsteen concert. You can be a Springsteen fan and love his albums, but it's not until you've seem him up on stage, absolutely pouring his heart out for four hours, that you can truly understand how awesome he is." That's pretty high praise for online fantasy sports, but Berry's book makes a compelling case for the new American pastime's most dedicated believers.

"The craziest story I know is about this one soldier who was in Afghanistan on his fantasy draft day," says Berry. "There was only one place outside where he could get a connection, and a bomb went off 60 yards from where he was standing." Luckily, the soldier was unharmed, but the story highlights how a true fantasy obsessive will never miss their draft day — even by peril of death.

With obsession also comes dedication. Berry knows of a tattoo league, where the losers have to get a humiliating tattoo of his league's choice. Even Berry can't abide that one. ("Imagine a Justin Bieber tattoo on a grown-man," he muses, with a shiver.)

Insane commitment

"The craziest story I know is about this one soldier who was in Afghanistan on his fantasy draft day. There was only one place outside where he could get a connection, and a bomb went off 60 yards from where he was standing."

Author Matthew Berry
On the lengths people will go to in order to be victorious in fantasy sports

For most of us, the stakes are never as high as death or Bieber, but Berry promises that there's plenty of fun to be had, even for the most casual fans among us.

Berry says that ESPN is always trying to figure out ways to grow the fantasy industry, from including fantasy segments in "real" sports programs to making sure that web and mobile applications are easy to use, and appeal to everyone from grandmothers and rabbis to college girls and even pro athletes themselves. And it's not just sports like football that define the world of fantasy. "You can play fantasy anything," says Berry. "There are fantasy movie leagues where people win points depending on how successful the movies are. In Japan, fantasy sumo is huge. Any place where people can complete, there is an opportunity for fantasy."

So, what's next? Fantasy lay-offs? Fantasy obituaries? Only time will tell.

Video Game Review

Super Mario 3D World

Console. Wii

Rated. Universal

It's more than a costume. When Mario slips into his Cat Suit, he's a kitty from tail to mustache. It's the way he sits with curiosity, bats his paws and scampers after rabbits. This is the plumber's most irresistible adventure, a mix of 3D castle puzzles, thrill rides, and hidden secrets. Some are revealed by blowing on your controller, others are found with friends. A creative mix of pneumatic tubes, haunted shadows, and dazzling visual effects place this among the year's best. **KRIS ABEL**

New arc for series

Iron Man's magical new enemies

As if mythical Dark Elves from Svartalfheim weren't enough of a test for Tony Stark, the armour-clad Avenger now has to match wits with the now-dead Mandarin's fabled rings of power. The new arc for Marvel's ongoing Iron Man series starts in March with issue No. 23 and, said writer Kieron Gillen, the five-part story drawn by Luke Ross, melds a culture clash pitting magic, modern technology and fairy-inspired legend and lore. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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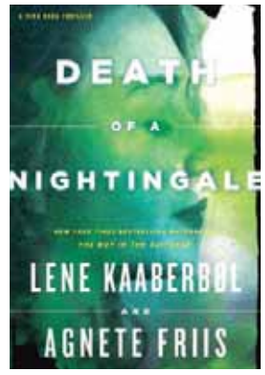
Your next favourite read

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News In New York City

Buying In by Laura Hemphill

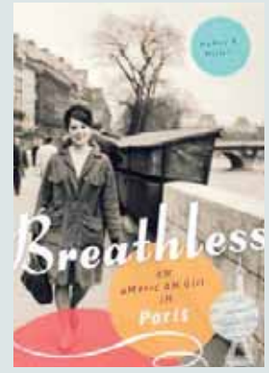
Fiction. Former Wall Street financier Laura Hemphill pens a riveting novel about what it takes to make it in the world of finance, particularly as a young woman competing with the boys. Fresh out of college, Sophie lands a job as a Wall Street analyst. She's thrilled to break away from her small town and will do whatever it takes to succeed — even when it means never seeing her boyfriend, missing Thanksgiving with her family and not having time to make any new New York friends. Though the characters in the book are fictional, Hemphill bases the story on the very real expectations she faced in the high-stakes world of finance.

Death of a Nightingale by Lene Kaaberbol and Agnete Friis



Crime fiction. Best-selling Danish duo Kaaberbol and Friis are back with an action-packed thriller about a rescue worker trying to get to the bottom of a complicated murder case. Natasha is charged with killing her fiancé, but escapes custody. Natasha's first husband was also murdered and now, after this second murder, someone tries to kidnap her eight-year-old daughter. Natasha flees to a crisis centre, where she gets to know a Red Cross nurse named Nina. Nina is on a mission to discover the truth. Is the woman she is helping, and her new friend, a cold-blooded killer? It's a mystery that will keep you turning the pages.

Breathless: An American Girl in Paris by Nancy K. Miller



Memoir. If you come from a town where everyone settles down early and you're off chasing big city dreams, you'll definitely be able to relate to Nancy Miller. Nancy grew up as an average middle-class American, but she did something no one she knew dared to do: move to Paris after she graduated college in 1961. It's there that she really comes of age, taking advantage of every adventure that presents itself. Nancy falls in love with another American expatriate, who promises her an exciting life of luxury. But shortly after they get married, she discovers he is lying about who he really is and she has to move back to America, heartbroken.

Everything Jennifer's into.

Jennifer Brown, Reveal contest winner.

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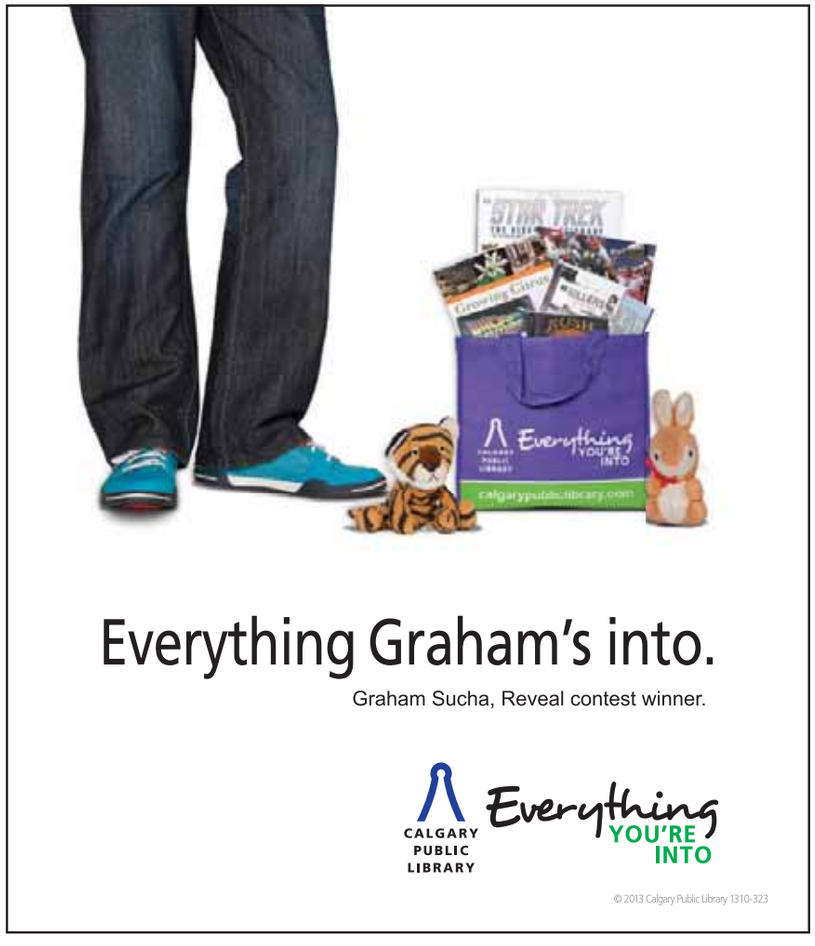

Everything Graham's into.

Graham Sucha, Reveal contest winner.

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All hail the chief (of staff)

The chief of staff to a top politician is not usually the one in the spotlight. Generally, they prefer to pull the levers of power anonymously from the corridors and meeting rooms while press secretaries face the media. But with the Senate scandal, Nigel Wright has become something of a household name. In Hollywood, chiefs of staff are also having a moment thanks to shows such as Scandal and Veep. Here's how Wright measures up against his fictionalized counterparts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nigel Wright

Job: Chief of staff to Stephen Harper
Age: 50
Marital Status: Single
Background: Lawyer, then made millions as a Bay Street businessman.
Style: Calm, cool and collected. Described by friends as having high ethical standards despite current allegations of fraud, breach of trust and bribery for covering Sen. Mike Duffy's contested expenses.
General health: Marathon runner; gets up before dawn to exercise.
Quote: "My intention was always to secure repayment of funds owed to taxpayers. I acted within the scope of my duties and remain confident that my actions were lawful."

Cyrus Beene (Scandal)

Job: Chief of staff to U.S. President Fitzgerald Grant
Age: 50s
Marital Status: Married to White House reporter James Novak, with whom he has an adopted daughter.
Background: Campaign guru and political fixer. Once offered chance to run Harvard University.
Style: Ruthless, seemingly lacking in all scruples or limits. Helped rig an election; put a hit out on his own boyfriend; hired a hit man to kill a woman who had a fling with the president.
General health: Poor. Has been hospitalized for a heart attack.
Quote: "The nitty-gritty, morally bankrupt, back-alley-brawling rest of the game, that's me...."

Linda Vasquez (House of Cards)

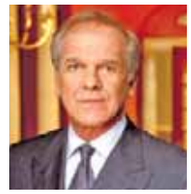
Job: Chief of staff to U.S. President Garrett Walker
Age: Late 40s/early 50s
Marital Status: Unclear; has a college-age son, Ruben.
Background: A key player in Walker's campaign.
Style: "She's as tough as a two-dollar steak," as well as loyal and devoted to party ideals. But her weakness is Ruben.
General health: Trim, but you get the sense her chief exercise is marathon BlackBerry clicking.
Quote: "Now we have to lead. And that means making tough choices."

Eli Gold (The Good Wife)

Job: Chief of staff to Illinois Governor Peter Florrick
Age: Late 40s/early 50s
Marital Status: Divorced; has a daughter.
Background: Political consultant, concert pianist.
Style: Smooth, cunning, passionate. Investigated by the Department of Justice for vote buying. Deleted a critical voice mail sent to his boss' estranged wife by her love interest.
General health: Fit, but high-strung and emotionally repressed.
Quote: "I don't have many enemies in life — I get along with Republicans, Protestants, Catholics, even a few reporters. But the one thing I hate is amateurs."

Amy Brookheimer (Veep)

Job: Chief of staff to Vice-President Selina Meyer
Age: 30s
Marital Status: Single
Background: Capitol Hill staffer
Style: Generally even keeled, but with flashes of insecurity and frustration. Has mastered the art of managing a difficult, often irrational boss with a smile.
General health: Generally stressed out, poor sleeping habits, potty mouth.
Quote: "No, she cannot fall asleep on live TV. Not on C-Span. The irony would be too huge."



Leo McGarry (The West Wing)

Job: Chief of staff to President Josiah Bartlet
Age: 55 when he began the job
Marital Status: Divorced; has a daughter.
Background: Former air force pilot and labour secretary; made his millions in defence industry.
Style: Generally calm and loyal, not a yes man, won't suffer fools. Excellent reputation.
General health: Recovering alcoholic and barbiturates addict, workaholic. Died of massive heart attack (following the real-life death of actor John Spencer, who played McGarry).

NIGEL WRIGHT PHOTO, THE CANADIAN PRESS; ALL OTHER PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

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Prepping for an old school crime spree

Miniseries. The cast of Bonnie & Clyde immersed themselves in their stories and each other's company

PAT HEALY
Metro World News

Holliday Grainger and Emile Hirsch star in Bonnie & Clyde, which airs Sunday, Dec. 8 and Monday, Dec. 9 at 9 p.m. on Lifetime and History. CONTRIBUTED

Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow began a two-year crime spree in 1932 that could never happen in 2013.

Sure, the fame-hungry robbers would be all over the Internet, posting selfies of Bonnie holding a pistol and chomping on a cigar on Instagram, but even if they were able to draw millions of followers on Twitter and maintain the public's interest for that amount of time, they couldn't have dodged the cops for that long.

"You couldn't have it (happen) now because there would be an amber alert like 12 minutes later," says Lane Garrison, who plays Clyde's brother Buck on the two-night miniseries Bonnie & Clyde.

The concept of people being products of their times was very much present in the minds of the Bonnie & Clyde cast, which also includes Holliday Grangier and Emile Hirsch in the respective title roles, William Hurt as the Texas Ranger who hunts them down and Sarah Hyland (Haley from Modern Family!) as Buck's wife. Garrison says they all read Jeff Guinn's book Go Down Together: The True, Untold Story of Bonnie & Clyde before coming onto the set.

"This was a young man dealing in the middle of the Depression era and they didn't have anything," says Garrison, who grew up in Dallas, where the gangsters are originally from. "They had no money and Buck lacked an education, so of course he took to a life of crime. For me, stepping into that character, it was really about understanding what motivated him and that was family, first and foremost."

To get that family feel, he and Hirsch also spent a good deal of time bro-ing out.

"Emile and I — two weeks out, before the shoot —we literally hung out 24/7," says Garrison. "We did everything together; I mean, stupid things like going gator-watching and we would work out together and we would go watch movies like they did, and I think by bonding us together — we're really tight, we talk all the time now and we're really good friends — I think that was the main part of knowing who this person was."

Pro at cons

Lane Garrison GETTY IMAGES

- Lane Garrison is probably best known for playing another outlaw, David "Tweener" Apolskis, on the show Prison Break. "Tweener, in my own opinion, was sort of one of those kids who just go caught up in the criminal justice system," he says, "and I feel like Buck definitely instigated the crime spree."

Read metro work every Monday and Wednesday for tips and trends in education and employment.

Only in Metro. News worth sharing.

Notice of Hearing for Temporary Guardianship Order To

Ariel Dela Cruz

Take notice that on the **7th day of January, 2014 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta**, a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Temporary Guardianship Order** of your child born on **March 25, 2009**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

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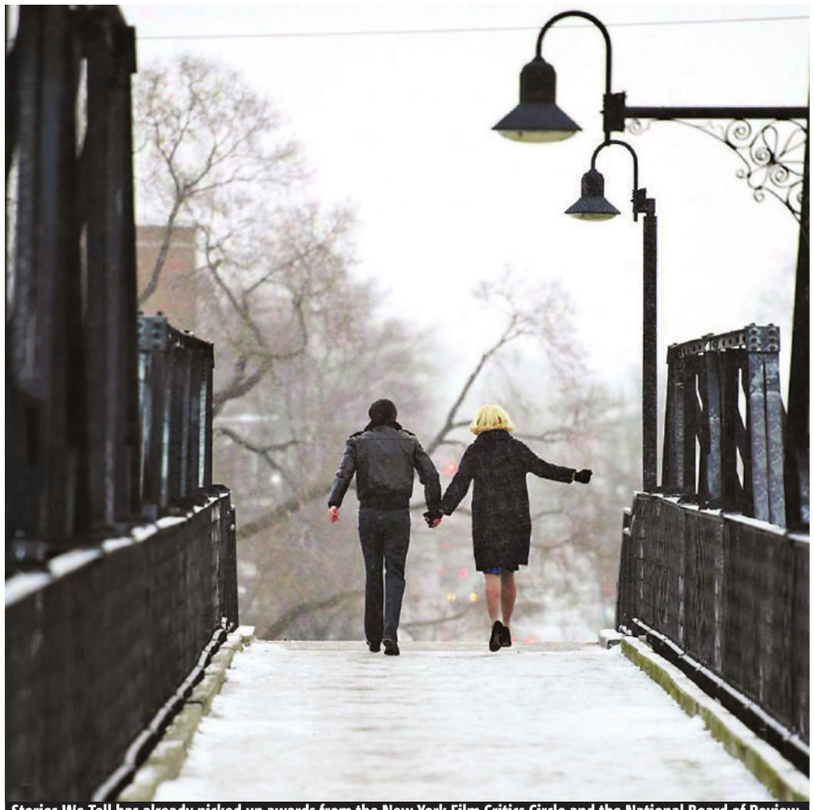

Stories We Tell has already picked up awards from the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review.
CONTRIBUTED

Promoting Polley: Doc hits award circuit

Stories We Tell.
Sarah Polley's true tale of her family secret has become a serious Oscar contender

Sarah Polley's intimate family tale Stories We Tell was supposed to be the little-seen documentary the actress-turned-director made between larger dramatic features.

Instead, it's become a serious Oscar contender and widely acclaimed documentary debut, garnering plenty of attention south of the border, including awards from the New York Film Critics Circle for best non-fiction film and the National Board of Review for best documentary.

Now, she and producer Anita Lee are gearing up for an awards circuit they hope will culminate with a golden statue at the Academy Awards.

"It's really, really exciting," Lee says of recently making the short list for a best documentary Oscar nomination, alongside 14 other films.

"It's so incredibly awesome."

Lee says Polley "is absolutely thrilled" with the surprise acclaim for her intensely personal film, which explores a long-held family secret about her true parentage.

They learned of making the Oscar short list Tuesday, the same day they were handed the best non-fiction prize by the New York Film Critics Circle. The National Board of Review announced it picked Polley's film as best doc on Wednesday.

Documentary branch members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will now choose five nominees from a pool of 15.

Lee says it's an honour just to make the short list, but she admits that she and Polley are ready to promote Stories We Tell to academy voters to boost their chances of snagging a nomination.

On promoting the film

"I really am learning that it's not just about the merit of the film, it is very strategic and political and it involves marketing and a very big Oscar machinery that exists in the U.S. industry," says Lee, a producer for the National Film Board based in Toronto. "And so I feel like it's a lottery but the odds are not bad so we're hopeful."

That means hosting key screenings in Los Angeles and New York, and making sure they attend events like the International Documentary Association's IDA Awards on Friday. Lee says she's heading to L.A. on Thursday for the bash, where Stories We Tell will compete for the best feature award against The Act of Killing, Blackfish, Let the Fire Burn and The Square.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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David Foster looks to round out trophy case

Canadian talent.
Grammy-winning producer wants to secure a Tony Award and an Oscar to complete his set

Though he's famous for his sweepingly grand adult pop productions, David Foster in person can be punk-rock blunt.

Take, for example, the answer issued by the decorated Canadian producer — who has earned 16 Grammy Awards, five Junos, an Emmy, a Golden Globe and three Academy Award nominations — when asked why he decided to pen the music for an as-yet un-produced musical based on Depression-era cartoon sex symbol Betty Boop.

"I want to win a Tony. It's just plain and simple," Foster said in an interview in Toronto on Wednesday, wearing a wry smile. "What better shot than with an icon like Betty Boop? She's iconic and everybody knows who she is, which gives you kind of a leg up, I think.

Aspirations

"I've been nominated for three Oscars and never won. I want an Oscar and a Tony and then I'll have the complete (set)."
David Foster
Talking about career goals

"And yeah, I want a Tony. I've been nominated for three Oscars and never won. I want an Oscar and a Tony and then I'll have the complete (set)," he adds, recapping the other major awards he's secured. "I want those two. That's drive enough for me."

The Victoria native says he wrote 24 songs after being contacted by Bill Haber, the Broadway producer whose credits include War Horse, August: Osage County and Spamalot.

But the production is being held up for now by the book, reportedly being handled by Oscar Williams and Sally Robinson.

"We just can't get the book right," said Foster, who added that he would be involved in casting should the production ever get to that stage.

"I'm not talking out of school here, they've admitted that the music is ahead of the book. So I think I've done a really good job of writing some great songs and the book needs to equal the music now. And until it does, they will not go forward with it."

While he awaits progress on that production, it's not as though Foster is lacking for work.

Roughly two years ago, the 64-year-old took over as chairman of Verve Music Group, a jazz imprint whose sprawling roster now includes Stevie Wonder, Diana Krall, Bryan Adams, Sarah McLachlan, Paul Anka, Rod Stewart, Elvis Costello and Mary J. Blige, whose recent holiday record, A Mary Christmas, was helmed by Foster.

"Like everything else I do, I'm going to throw my body and soul into it and see if I can be a good record chairman," he said. "We've also signed a lot of unknown singers. I'm sure we'll fail a lot because that's the nature of the business — you sign 12 artists, one hits, you feel very blessed.

"I don't want to have that horrible a track record but I'm sure we'll sign six artists, one will hopefully hit and five won't. That's kind of the nature of the beast. But I'm enthused about it.... I want to be good at it. I hate being bad at things. And I hate failure.... I don't want to lose at this."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Grammy-winning Canadian producer David Foster.
CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Christmas songs

This is Foster's time of year for music.

- **Hit albums.** He has helmed hit Christmas albums for Michael Bublé, Josh Groban, Rod Stewart, Andrea Bocelli and Celine Dion, and concedes it can be a challenge finding new ways to interpret such well-worn classics.

5 things to look for as Grammy nominations approach

New Zealand singer Lorde will perform at the Grammy Awards nominations special this Friday. VICTORIA WILL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This is a great year to be a Grammy Awards prognosticator. There's been a lot of excellent music, but there are clear favourites as The Recording Academy prepares to unveil nominees Friday (a handful will be unveiled during a CBS special and the rest announced after it airs). The trends are pretty easy to define.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Big winners

Homecoming dance

Remember how it felt in high school when you just knew who would be elected homecoming king and queen long before the big dance? The Grammy nominations have that feel with Taylor Swift and Justin Timberlake a virtual lock to be two of the night's most popular picks, and probably top nominees. Swift's Red has sold 6 million copies, and though it came out in November 2012, it's had staying power.

Royal-ty

Breakout star

We offer up Lorde as this year's other likely multiple nominee. The 17-year-old from New Zealand stood in stark opposition to the swag-flavoured atmosphere of this year's singles market, offering up Royals. The song is a catchy refutation of popular culture that became something of an anthem for the dispossessed. Grammy voters love precocious teens and smart pop songs. Mix those things together and you've got Lorde.

White boy rap

Unlikely rap stars

Seattle-based Macklemore & Ryan Lewis have been the rap sensations of the pop world this year with hits like the quirky Thrift Shop and the same-sex acceptance song Same Love. They are strong contenders for record and song of the year, but will they dominate in rap categories along names like Drake and Kendrick Lamar?

All Pharrell, all the time

The singles

Two of the contenders for record and song of the year share a common denominator: Pharrell Williams. He helped Robin Thicke make Blurred Lines an inescapable part of 2013 and took a starring turn on Daft Punk's mind candy Get Lucky. Will he end up competing against himself if both are nominated for song or record of the year?

Fresh faces

Newcomers

Besides Lorde, Florida Georgia Line are strong contenders to be nominated for best new artist thanks to the success of Cruise, with Nelly. There could be two rap contenders: Macklemore & Ryan Lewis and Kendrick Lamar, the platinum-selling critical darling of the rap world.

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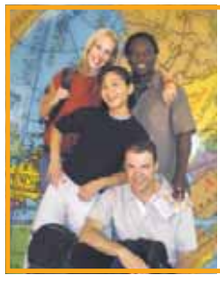
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Music the world over

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

A world tour this week: Ireland, the Horn of Africa and Detroit.

Carousel/Fight Like Apes

This Dublin band is fronted by singer MayKay, who might be quite insane. In this case, that's good. Don't let the cheery melody distract you from the lyrics.

Hadnetna/ Yohannes "Wedi" Tikabo

Hailed by some as "the Bob Marley of Eritrea," this song that seems to criticize the regime of President Isaias Afewerki. You just don't do that. Ex-pats are smuggling the song into the country to rally the masses.

Rap God/ Eminem

Em's latest video resurrects Max Headroom, the stuttering virtual talk show host from the '80s. Good to see him back. Max, I mean.

Wedding bells. Who will be the real ruler of Versailles? Kim, Kanye?

Kim and Kanye may get hitched at French palace. GETTY IMAGES

Kim and Kanye are going to do a low-key, family-only wedding with little to no fuss or expense. Just kidding!

The guy released a song this year titled I Am a God, so obviously he's going to want to do it big, and that song has the line "in a French-ass restaurant, hurry up with my damn croissant" so he obviously has a fondness for the French, which can only mean they're getting married at the Palace of Versailles!

Ah yes, the once humble homestead of Louis XIV will possibly host the magical union of Kanye and Kim, reports Us Weekly.

"Kanye has never been married and wants a big [wedding]," a source told the mag. "They are not working with a budget," the source continued. METRO

Mind the App

John Lennon: The Bermuda Tapes

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Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
scene@metronews.ca

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Cynthia Nixon ALL IMAGES GETTY

Charlotte will try to twist Miranda's arm to complete Sex and the City trilogy

While Cynthia Nixon may have shot down the idea of a third Sex and the City film, co-star Kristin Davis is still holding out hope. "I'm going to have a little talk with Cynthia the next time I see her," Davis tells Haute Living magazine. "I don't think (a third film) is a pipe dream. There is a discussion. People talk about it amongst the people who are the players, but I don't know if it will come together. It would be very exciting if it did."

The Word

Paltrow's festive Kors collection too rich for most people's blood

TINA CHADHA
Metro World News

Last month,we found out that Gwyneth Paltrow and Michael Kors would create a special holiday collection for Goop, Paltrow's lifestyle site. Well, that day has come, people. The line — which consists of some of the Oscar-winner's favourite Kors pieces, but updated — debuts on the site Thursday and includes a high-end suede tote, an oversized gold watch, leather smoking slippers, a cashmere cape, a grey structured peplum sweater and a military-inspired wool coat. But like the clothes you imagine Gwynnie creating her organic meals in, these threads veer on the luxe side. The items range in price from $145 for a bracelet to $2,595 for the cosy cape. Something a bit more universal: Kors' grandmother's recipe for easy-to-make butter cookies.

Britney Spears

Hey critics! Don't you dare burst Britney's bubble

The reviews for Britney Spears' new album, Britney Jean, have been pretty terrible — but Spears herself has no idea. "Britney's manager, Larry Rudolph, and her father, Jamie, won't allow her to see any of the bad reviews," a source tells Radar Online. "Britney doesn't even have access to the Internet and lives in a bubble. Her team will allow her to believe that the album is being well-received. No one wants to upset Britney. If she were to read anything negative, it could send her into a bad tailspin, and both Larry and Jamie know that can't happen with her upcoming shows in Vegas about to launch."

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Season's readings

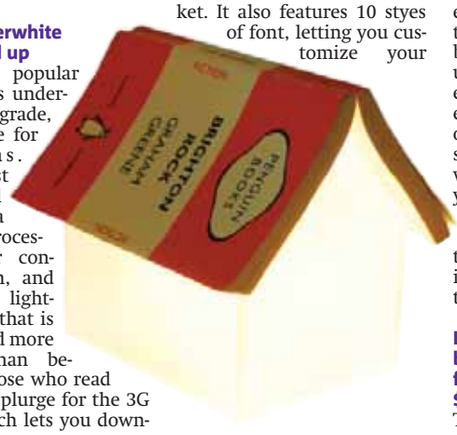
Holiday gift guide

Kobo Aura HD — $169.99.

MIKE YAWNEY
For Metro

Don't just buy the bookworm on your list another paperback. Think outside the box and get them some tech they can use to enhance their reading experiences.

Kindle Paperwhite — $139 and up
Amazon's popular eReader has undergone an upgrade, just in time for Christmas. The latest model features a faster processor, higher contrast screen, and a next-gen lighting system that is brighter and more uniform than before. For those who read on the go, splurge for the 3G model, which lets you download books without Wi-Fi and no monthly fees.



Kobo Aura HD — $169.99
Text so crisp and clear you will forget you are reading on an electronic device. Kobo Aura HD features an ultra-high resolution display with 265 dpi, higher than most eReaders on the market. It also features 10 styes of font, letting you customize your reading experience. Kobo remains a Wi-Fi only device.

Classic Novel eReader covers — $24 and up
Disguise any eReader as a classic novel. These U.K.-made covers come in a variety of sizes for multiple eReaders and span a wide variety of literary styles. Not only are these covers stylish, they also protect your valuable eReader from scratches.

DryCASE waterproof eReader case — $66.98
Know someone who likes to take their eReader in the bathtub? How about the beach? These vacuum sealed pouches protect your eReader (among other devices) from dirt, sand, and, most importantly, water, while still allowing you to use them. They also have built-in headphone and microphone jacks. Not the sexiest case, but it beats using a plastic bag.

BookBook Hardback Leather Case for MacBook — $79.99 and up
These stylish cases disguise your MacBook or MacBook Air as an antique leather bound book. Each case is made from genuine leather and is hand-distressed so no two cases look the same. When the case is closed your computer looks just like a book, helping to mask it from the eyes of thieves.

Book Rest Lamp — $64.54
Place your favourite book on top of the light base to create a stylish reading light. Or simply use the base as a bookmark. The frosted glass helps disperse light, making it perfect by which to read.

Blurb Self Publishing — Various prices
A great gift for the creative person on your list. Blurb lets anyone publish a novel, cookbook, photo book or magazine through its online service. Upload the text and photos, pick a layout and wait as the finished professional product is mailed to you. Gift card options are available.

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Pick a Christmas tree that makes the cut

Choices. Firs have taken over from pine trees when it comes to real trees in the home

MICHELLE WILLIAMS
For Metro

All Christmas trees are beautiful — even Charlie Brown's scrawny little twig was a winner once it was all jacked up with decorations.

But if you are a bit fussier, here is a list of some of the most popular trees with the help of Arthur Loewen, president of the Canadian Christmas Tree Growers Association.

At one time, the pine tree was the No. 1 holiday tree, but this wide, heavy, long-needled tree has been replaced in popularity by the fir, a lighter, thinner, short-needled tree grown in many varieties across the country.

Native to Canada's East Coast, the Balsam fir is a nice-looking, hardy tree that sells for a relatively good price.

"It keeps moderately well, has rigid stems that don't sag when you hang decorations, and it has a thin trunk, which makes it easier to handle and put into a stand," Loewen said.

Gaining in popularity is the Fraser fir, also found primarily in Eastern Canada, but also in the west. It's pricier for a few reasons.

"It's the best needle keeper when you bring it inside," Loewen said. "It's lightweight, narrow, has the most rigid branches, and tends to last longer than the Balsam.

But the big reason for the extra cost is that there is more work in raising a Fraser fir to harvest. They take longer to grow than other firs, they grow best in dry areas and are more prone to disease and insects.

In the West, the Douglas fir tops the list.

"It matures quickly, so it's not as expensive to grow," Loewen said.

However, it doesn't last as long and the branches do sag a bit more than the more expensive Noble fir, also native to the West.

"The Noble fir is much like the Fraser, except it has a bluish colour," Loewen said.

Priced like the Fraser, this "king of the Christmas trees" grows slowly but does well as a holiday tree.

Christmas Tree Day

The Canadian Christmas Tree Growers Association has declared Dec. 7 as National Christmas Tree Day.

- Canada harvests approximately 2.5 millions trees annually
- More than 34,600 hectares (76,700 acres) were used for growing Christmas trees in Canada in 2011.
- There were 2,381 Christmas tree plantations in Canada in 2001.
- Each hectare produces enough oxygen for 40 people.
- For more, visit canadianchristmastrees.ca.

Real Christmas trees can help enhance the holiday experience. PRESSMASTER/SHUTTERSTOCK

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K2 Entity Snow Helmet, $61, available at Mountain Equipment Co-op, mec.ca.

Yoga Mat, $20.99, available at Canadian Tire, canadiantire.ca.

Halti Kirri Jacket, $130, available at Mountain Equipment Co-op, mec.ca.

SPORTS Bike Cap,$14.95, available at chic-savvy.com.

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Holiday glitz and glamour

Foxy Originals Downtown Deco Empire Necklace, $52, available at Foxyoriginals.com.

Banana Republic Turqoise Statement Necklace, $134, available at Banana Republic, bananarepublic.ca.

Tiffany sterling silver Atlas Lariat, $275, available at Tiffany, tiffany.ca.

Baublebar Crystal Diadem Drops earrings, $34 US, available at baublebar.com.

Swatch Escaille watch with plastic tortoise shell strap, $75, available at department stores, swatch.com.

Haitian Hand-Beaded Necklace, $100, available at worldvision.ca/gifts or via 1-800-844-7993.

Swarovski Knot Ring, $120, available at Swarovski, swarovski.ca.

Believe crystal bracelets with grosgrain ribbon, $105 each, available at Mika Designs, 514-748-5630.

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Pet Stocking, $6, available at Real Canadian Superstore, superstore.ca

Pet Valu Premium Catnip, $1.99-$5.29, available at Pet Valu, petvalu.com.

Tee Pee Cat Playhouse, $35, available at Chapters/Indigo, chapters.indigo.ca.

KYJen Christmas Antlers, $4.99-$7.99, available at Pet Valu, petvalu.com.

Jump Sushi Box With Catnip Toys, $11.99, available at Pet Valu, petvalu.com.

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Liquid Assets

Liqueur in the spotlight

LIQUID ASSETS
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The term liqueur covers a lot of ground — from decadent, cream-based combinations, all the way to secret blends of herbs and spices. Most have a life outside of the holiday season, but I bet that for the majority of you buying a bottle in December is your yearly liqueur fix.

There's something sad about that. The liqueur market has never been more vibrant, venturing into packaging and flavour innovation territory any other booze category would fear to tread.

Not that the old standbys are resting on their liquid laurels. Bailey's (the Irish king of Christmas drinking) has introduced new flavoured family members and even Grand Marnier has dipped its cap in the pool of fruity expression, creating a special series of alternative versions.

Never to be outdone, Mexico's Kahlúa Limited Edition Gingerbread Liqueur (375 ml, $15.49 - $16.99) starts with the classic mix of rum and Arabica coffee and then adds gingerbread, nutmeg, cinnamon and clove. It results in a seasonal treat that's great over ice or as fuel in your favourite cup of joe. **PRICES REFLECT THE RANGE ACROSS THE COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

Gingerbread graduates to a grown-up torte

Almond-Chocolate Gingerbread Torte. This decadent treat features the quintessential holiday flavour with chocolate and almonds

This recipe serves 12. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ingredients

Chocolate Ganache Glaze
- 90 ml (6 tbsp) whipping cream
- 22 ml (1 1/2 tbsp) light corn syrup
- 250 ml (1 cup) semi-sweet chocolate chips

Cake
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) butter, softened
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) sugar
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) molasses
- 2 eggs
- 5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla
- 300 ml (1 1/4 cups) all-purpose flour
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) unsweetened cocoa powder
- 10 ml (2 tsp) ground ginger
- 7 ml (1 1/2 tsp) cinnamon
- 5 ml (1 tsp) baking powder
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) allspice
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) buttermilk
- 150 ml (2/3 cup) toasted slivered almonds, divided
- Chocolate Ganache Glaze
- 75 to 125 ml (1/3 to 1/2 cup) apricot or peach preserves

1. Heat oven to 180 C (350 F). Coat two 23-cm (9-inch) round layer cake pans with vegetable spray.

2. In a mixer bowl, beat butter until fluffy. Beat in sugar, then molasses to blend thoroughly. Beat in eggs, one at a time. Beat in vanilla.

3. In another bowl, sift dry ingredients together. Beat into butter mixture just to blend. Mix in buttermilk. Coarsely chop 75 ml (1/3 cup) of the almonds; mix into batter. Pour into prepared pans, dividing equally and smoothing tops. Bake in centre of oven for about 15 minutes, just until springy to the touch. Let cool in pans on racks for 5 minutes, then turn out onto racks to cool completely.

4. Meanwhile, prepare glaze. In a small saucepan over medium heat, bring whipping cream and corn syrup to a boil. Remove from heat and mix in chocolate chips until smooth. Let cool until mixture is thick enough to spread on cake. Set aside.

5. Place one cake layer on a serving plate; cover with preserves and drizzle with glaze. Top with remaining cake layer. Spread glaze evenly over top and sides of torte. Garnish with remaining almonds. Let glaze set for at least 1 hour before serving. **THE CANADIAN PRESS/ ALMOND BOARD OF CALIFORNIA**

Notice of Hearing for Temporary Guardianship Order To

Dennis Dagle

Take notice that on the **7th day of January, 2014 at 9:30 a.m., at Calgary Family Court, Courtroom #1205, 601 – 5th Street SW, Calgary, Alberta**, a hearing will take place.

A Director, under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act will make an application for: **Temporary Guardianship Order** of your children born on **November 26, 1998 and May 30, 2001**. If you wish to speak to this matter in court, you MUST appear in court on this date. You do have the right to be represented by a lawyer. If you do not attend in person or by a lawyer, an Order may be made in your absence and the Judge may make a different Order than the one being applied for by the Director. You will be bound by any Order the Judge makes.

You do have the right to appeal the Order within 30 days from the date the Order is made.

Contact: Diane Charlebois; Jackie Ellice; Daniella Eggink
Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority
Phone: (403) 297-2978

Would you like to be kept in the loop of the hottest openings and events in your city? To be notified of other notable events for young professionals, go to notable.ca/signup.php.

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Julian Brass, Founder of notable.ca, Canada's online source for young professionals

Stuart McLean's Vinyl Cafe

On December 6, Stuart McLean will be at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium (1415 14th Avenue NW) with his 2013 Vinyl Café Christmas Concert. The Vinyl Café is a CBC radio show and follows McLean's character Dave, an owner of a second-hand record store. The show features a collection of stories, essays and music. To purchase tickets to the upcoming show, you can call 1-855- 985-5000 or visit ticketmaster.ca.

Carrie'd Away at Wine-Ohs

On Monday you can experience Wine-Ohs' Carrie'd Away. This monthly variety show features burlesque, music, circus entertainment, sketch comedy and stand up. The show on the 9th is a special fundraiser for the Philippines with proceeds going towards disaster relief. Performances will include appearances from comedian Paul Kuster, burlesque star Deena Divine, accordion player Anthony Appleby and juggling by Tony Esteves. Wine-Ohs is located at 811 1 Street SW. Cover is $5 or whatever you can pay. wine-ohs.com.

CPO at the Devonian Gardens

On December 10 at 11:30 a.m., you can catch the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra. The CPO will be at the CORE downtown for a fun lunchtime performance in the beautiful and newly renovated Devonian Gardens — a great place to walk at lunch. Make sure to check out the koi ponds. A variety of CPO musicians will entertain you in a beautiful tropical setting. It might help you forget about the cold weather outside. This is a free event. calgary.ca.

Vine and Dine with Il Sogno

The Vine and Dine club has been responsible for educating Calgary palates since 2005. Each month the club visits restaurants around the city to try interesting wines and to discover great new food and wine pairings. On Wednesday the 11th, Vine and Dine has partnered with Il Sogno to bring you a taste of Italy. The evening will start with sparkling wine and canapés followed by a decadent four-course meal with wine pairings. Tickets are $89.75. Call 403-870-9802 or email Linda@vineanddine.ca. Event begins at 6:30 p.m.

Pro-Arts at Noon

Pro-Arts at Noon is a great alternative to spending your lunch in the food court. From noon until 1 p.m. on Wednesdays, you are invited to a free concert at the Cathedral Church (1 Street and 7 Avenue SE). Pro-Arts celebrates the vibrant culture of Calgary's arts community. On Wednesday, the La Vle vocal ensemble will be entertaining the audience with an a cappella performance. The group is made up of three sopranos and three mezzo sopranos. For more information on La Vle or other upcoming Pro-Arts shows, visit proartssociety.ca.

Maker's Night Out

On Thursday, Telus Spark is hosting a Maker Workshop for adults who want to learn more about science and soldering. This is your chance to use special tools to connect circuits to a circuit board. You will be provided with a soldering kit and at the end of the night you'll be able to take home your project. The general rate is $40, which includes the soldering kit. Once you're done at the workshop you are free to enjoy the rest of the Telus Adult Night. Call 403-817-6800 to register. sparkscience.ca.

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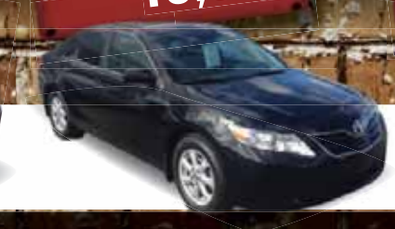

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Ottawa

RedBlacks to name Campbell head coach

The Ottawa RedBlacks have found their man.

According to a CFL source requesting anonymity, the RedBlacks have chosen Calgary Stampeders defensive co-ordinator Rick Campbell as their first head coach. They're expected to make it official Friday morning at a news conference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto

Burke joins Argos as defensive co-ordinator

The Toronto Argonauts hired Tim Burke as their new defensive co-ordinator.

Burke replaces Chris Jones, who last month was named head coach of the Edmonton Eskimos.

Burke served as head coach of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers from August 2012 through the 2013 season before being relieved of those duties.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Saskatchewan

Riders sign four vets to extensions

Receivers Chris Getzlaf and Rob Bagg and offensive linemen Brendon LaBatte and Dominic Picard all signed contract extensions to remain with the Grey Cup champions Saskatchewan Roughriders.

Getzlaf, Bagg and Picard are under contract through 2015 while LaBatte's deal covers the 2016 season.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Lindsey Vonn participates in a downhill training run in Lake Louise on Wednesday. Vonn will make her season debut Friday. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Returning Vonn's got eye of the Tiger

Comeback from injured knee and leg. Ski star confident enough to take a rest day before Friday's season debut

American Lindsey Vonn will make her long-awaited World Cup skiing debut Friday.

The reigning Olympic women's downhill champion hasn't competed since tearing ligaments in her right knee and breaking a bone in her leg at the world championships in February. She skipped Thursday's training run but the American ski star said via Twitter she intended to make her return to racing in Lake Louise.

"I've decided to take today as a rest day but I will be racing tomorrow," Vonn said. "I can't wait for my first race."

Downhill races are scheduled for Friday and Saturday followed by Sunday's super-G.

Germany's Maria Hoefl-Riesch was the fastest in training Thursday with a time of one minute 56.52 seconds. Norway's Lotte Smiseth Sejersted was second, followed by Austrian Anna Fenninger. Larisa Yurkiw of Owen Sound, Ont., is the lone Canadian in the downhill and was 23rd.

Vonn was 22nd in the first training run Wednesday.

She has won a record 14 World Cup races at Lake Louise, which has earned the nickname "Lake Lindsey" because of her dominance. She swept all three races the last two years.

But the 29-year-old arrived at the Alberta resort with questions surrounding her knee.

She partially tore one of the surgically reconstructed ligaments while training in Copper Mountain, Colo., two weeks ago. Vonn didn't compete in the first downhill of the season last weekend in Beaver Creek, Colo.

Vonn needs three more World Cup wins to match the record of 62 held by Annemarie Moser-Proell. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"You know if your body is ready or not and I know that mine is ready." Lindsey Vonn

4 SPORTS

No purchase necessary. Full contest details available at clubmetro.com

Luge relay team

Canada's quartet looks on to Whistler

Sam Edney
JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sam Edney could only look on last weekend when a critical error cost Canada a chance at back-to-back World Cup luge medals in the team relay event.

The doubles team of Justin Snith and Tristan Walker left the starting gate too soon, resulting in a disqualification.

With the luge team relay set to make its Olympic debut at the fast-approaching Sochi Games, the Calgary quartet of Edney, Gough, Snith and Walker will look to get back on track when the only Canadian stop on the World Cup calendar goes Friday and Saturday at the Whistler Sliding Centre.

"We have a lot of fun with it as a group," the 29-year-old Edney said of the relay. "We're pretty confident.

"We've got a good team and we've got a good chance every weekend we race."

The Canadians picked up a World Cup silver in Austria two weeks ago in the event that includes three sleds — a women's single, men's single and a doubles — that race consecutively for a combined time. They also took second at last year's world championship in Whistler before capturing a World Cup bronze on the track in Sochi that will host the Olympic event.

Like the passing of a baton in a relay race, a slider hits a pad at the conclusion their run to open the gate at the top of the track.

Last weekend in Winterberg, Snith and Walker jumped the gun.

"It's better that we learn from it now and make sure it doesn't ever happen again," said Snith. "We know that mistake won't happen again. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ski Cross World Cup: Canucks set high bar

Focus on Sochi.
Canadians have pedigree to own podium in sport's second Olympics

Chris Del Bosco, bottom, and Brady Leman, top, compete in the U.S. Grand Prix ski cross finals last year in Park City, Utah. DOUG PENSINGER/GETTY IMAGES

The Canadian ski cross team's goal is to win two Olympic medals at the Sochi Games.

Considering the depth of the squad, that might be a rather conservative number.

The national team is loaded with experienced veterans and rising stars. Anchored by Chris Del Bosco, Brady Leman, Kelsey Serwa and Marielle Thompson, the Canadians enter the season-opening Audi FIS Ski Cross World Cup armed with confidence and podium familiarity.

"This weekend I believe we're fully capable of multiple medals," said assistant coach Willy Raine. "Every World Cup event we go to, we should have somebody on the podium."

Raine has reason to be optimistic, considering the stacked resumes of the team members.

Thompson, from Whistler, B.C., won a Crystal Globe last year as overall World Cup champion and took the silver at the 2013 world championship. Serwa, the 2011 world champion from Kelowna, B.C., underwent left knee surgery earlier this year but has recovered and feels ready heading into the season.

Del Bosco, a Montreal resident, won a world title in 2011 and has 18 World Cup podiums. Leman was ranked No. 2 in the world last year and is also a podium hopeful with veteran Dave Duncan of London, Ont.

"The bar is set high for us," Raine said. "We expect it and we're willing to work hard to (get) the results."

Canada has won the Nations' Cup as the No. 1 team on the World Cup circuit in four of the last five years.

"We push each other," Del Bosco said. "We're always trying to one-up each other."

Over 120 athletes will be on the slopes of the Nakiska Ski Area outside Calgary starting Friday to compete for over $80,000 in prize money and the chance to qualify for nomination to their respective Olympic teams. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Roar of the Rings

Jacobs set to play Sunday final

Reigning Canadian champion Brad Jacobs defeated veteran Kevin Martin 5-4 on Thursday to clinch a spot in Sunday's final of the Canadian Olympic curling trials.

The battle of the best took Jacobs's record to 6-0, but Martin goes to 5-1 and earns a berth into Saturday afternoon's semifinal.

The other semifinalist won't be determined until the men finish their seven-game Roar of the Rings round robin with a morning draw Friday at the MTS Centre.

With Martin leading 4-3, Jacobs blanked the eighth and ninth ends to keep the hammer in the 10th.

Both rinks had a pair of rocks inside the four-foot, with a Jacobs stone almost dead centre in the button.

Martin then put up a guard, forcing the 28-year-old Jacobs to do a run-back takeout and score two points.

Martin, who won gold at the 2010 Olympics and silver in 2002, is looking for a fourth trip to the Games. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL. Senators sent home packing from Florida

Martin St. Louis scored two goals, Ben Bishop won his 15th game this season, and the Tampa Bay Lightning beat the Ottawa Senators 3-1 on Thursday night.

Valtteri Filppula also scored for the Lightning, who were coming off consecutive shutout losses to Columbus (1-0) and Pittsburgh (3-0). Ondrej Palat had two assists.

Ottawa got a goal from Patrick Wiercioch.

St. Louis beat goalie Robin Lehner from just outside the crease to give Tampa Bay a 2-1 advantage 13:19 into the second. The Lightning captain tied Jason Arnott for 91st place on the NHL points list with 938.

Filppula's goal from the left circle made it 3-1 at 10:56 of the third.

St. Louis put the Lightning up 1-0 when he scored from in-close while falling forward with 3:15 left in the first.

Wiercioch tied it at 1-all with a power-play goal 6:11 into the second. He hadn't scored a goal in his previous 20 games.

Bishop made a nice save early in the first on Chris Neil's slot shot. The Lightning acquired Bishop from Ottawa last April.

Lehner kept the Senators within one early in the third when he stopped a shot by Nate Thompson during a breakaway.

Martin St. Louis celebrates one of his goals Thursday. ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tampa Bay defenceman Victor Hedman left after the first period with a lower-body injury, and defenceman Keith Aulie departed in the second due to an upper-body injury.

The Lightning were already without several key players, including centre Steven Stamkos (broken leg), left wing Ryan Malone (broken ankle), and defencemen Eric Brewer (lower body) and Radko Gudas (upper body).

Stamkos has a goal of returning in February, while Malone will be out three to four weeks. Brewer and Gudas could soon return. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Olsen gets Panthers purring past Jets

NHL. Defenceman tallies first NHL goal to help Florida end its 3-game losing streak

Dylan Olsen scored his first NHL goal to help the Florida Panthers beat the Winnipeg Jets 5-2 on Thursday night.

Jimmy Hayes, Nick Bjugstad, Tomas Fleischmann and Erik Gudbranson also scored for the Panthers. Tim Thomas stopped 29 shots and Scottie Upshall had two assists. Olsen also added an assist.

Olli Jokinen and Andrew Ladd scored for Winnipeg. Ondrej Pavelec made 21 saves.

The Panthers snapped a three-game losing streak and earned their first points during that span.

Olsen broke a 1-all tie at 3:31 of the second period when his wrist shot from the slot beat Pavelec. Upshall got his 100th career assist on the play.

Panthers goalie Tim Thomas stops a shot in front of the Jets' Devin Setoguchi on Thursday in Sunrise, Fla. JOEL AUERBACH/GETTY IMAGES

The Panthers went ahead 3-1 when Fleischmann scored with 2:01 left in the second. A shot by Mike Weaver bounced off Pavelec's blocker, and Fleischmann poked in the rebound.

Florida stretched its lead to 4-1 at 5:37 of the third. Bjugstad wrapped the puck around from behind the net and bounced it off Pavelec's leg and into the net.

Jokinen, on his 35th birthday, made it 4-2 with 7:15 left in the game when he put the puck through Thomas's pads from in front.

Hayes scored with 2:44 remaining on a breakaway to make it 5-2.

The Jets took a 1-0 lead on Ladd's goal 5:27 in. Bryan Little passed from the right side to Ladd in front, and he wristed it into an open net. Little leads the Jets with 27 points.

The Panthers tied it on Gudbranson's goal. His slap shot from just beyond the right circle rifled past Pavelec on the stick side at 14:02 of the first.

The Panthers had a goal disallowed on video review at 6:58 in the first when it was ruled that the puck and the goalie were both pushed into the net. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Montreal	30	18	9	3	82	63	39
Boston	28	18	8	2	76	57	38
Tampa Bay	28	17	10	1	79	68	35
Detroit	29	14	8	7	81	79	35
Toronto	29	15	11	3	80	79	33
Ottawa	29	11	14	4	83	95	26
Florida	29	8	16	5	66	97	21
Buffalo	29	6	21	2	49	88	14

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	30	20	9	1	94	67	41
Washington	28	14	12	2	83	82	30
NY Rangers	29	15	14	0	65	72	30
Carolina	29	12	12	5	66	81	29
Philadelphia	28	13	13	2	63	68	28
New Jersey	29	11	12	6	64	71	28
Columbus	28	11	14	3	68	80	25
NY Islanders	29	8	16	5	75	101	21

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Chicago	30	20	6	4	108	84	44
St. Louis	27	19	5	3	96	61	41
Minnesota	30	17	8	5	74	70	39
Colorado	26	19	7	0	78	60	38
Dallas	27	13	9	5	76	79	31
Winnipeg	30	13	13	4	80	87	30
Nashville	29	13	13	3	65	83	29

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
San Jose	28	19	4	5	97	67	43
Anaheim	30	18	7	5	93	80	41
Los Angeles	29	18	7	4	76	62	40
Phoenix	28	16	8	4	92	90	36
Vancouver	30	15	10	5	80	78	35
Calgary	27	10	13	4	74	94	24
Edmonton	30	10	18	2	83	103	22

Note: 2 points for a win, 1 point for overtime loss.

Thursday's results
Toronto 3 Dallas 2 (OT)
Tampa Bay 3 Ottawa 1
Florida 5 Winnipeg 2
Edmonton 8 Colorado 2
NY Rangers 3 Buffalo 1
Pittsburgh 5 San Jose 1
Carolina 5 Nashville 2
St. Louis 5 NY Islanders 1
Montreal 2 Boston 1
Minnesota 4 Chicago 3
Wednesday's results
Calgary 4 Phoenix 1
Montreal 4 New Jersey 3 (SO)
Philadelphia 6 Detroit 3
Friday's games — All times Eastern
San Jose at Carolina, 7 p.m.
Minnesota at Columbus, 7 p.m.
Detroit at New Jersey, 7 p.m.
Anaheim at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Colorado at Calgary, 9 p.m.
Phoenix at Vancouver, 10 p.m.
Saturday's games
Philadelphia at Dallas, 2 p.m.
Winnipeg at Tampa Bay, 7 p.m.
Nashville at Washington, 7 p.m.
Pittsburgh at Boston, 7 p.m.
Florida at Detroit, 7 p.m.
Buffalo at Montreal, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Ottawa, 7 p.m.
New Jersey at NY Rangers, 7:30 p.m.
Anaheim at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Calgary at Edmonton, 10 p.m.
NY Islanders at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	A	Pt
Crosby, Pgh	15	23	38
Malkin, Pgh	7	30	37
Kane, Chi	16	16	32
Getzlaf, Ana	14	18	32
Tavares, NYI	11	21	32
Steen, StL	20	11	31
Perry, Ana	16	15	31
Ovechkin, Wash	21	9	30
Zetterberg, Det	11	19	30
Thornton, SJ	5	25	30
Kunitz, Pgh	14	14	28
Couture, SJ	10	18	28
H. Sedin, Van	7	21	28
Karlsson, Ott	7	20	27

Thursday's games not included

MLS PLAYOFFS

MLS CUP

Saturday's game
Kansas City vs. Salt Lake, 4 p.m., EST

NFL

Thursday's result
Jacksonville 27 Houston 20
Sunday's games — All times Eastern
Kansas City at Washington, 1 p.m.
Minnesota at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
Buffalo at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Oakland at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
Miami at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Cleveland at New England, 1 p.m.
Indianapolis at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at Green Bay, 1 p.m.
Detroit at Philadelphia, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Denver, 4:05 p.m.
N.Y. Giants at San Diego, 4:25 p.m.
Seattle at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m.
St. Louis at Arizona, 4:25 p.m.
Carolina at New Orleans, 8:30 p.m.
Monday's game
Dallas at Chicago, 8:40 p.m.

NBA

Thursday's results
New York 113 Brooklyn 83
L.A. Clippers 101 Memphis 81
Chicago 107 Miami 87
Wednesday's results
Atlanta 107 L.A. Clippers 97
Phoenix 97 Houston 88
Dallas 100 New Orleans 97
Indiana 95 Utah 86
Portland 111 Oklahoma City 104
Cleveland 98 Denver 88
Detroit 105 Milwaukee 98
San Antonio vs. Minnesota, ppd.
Friday's games — All times Eastern
Philadelphia at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Milwaukee at Washington, 7 p.m.
Denver at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
Orlando at New York, 7:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Golden State at Houston, 8 p.m.
Oklahoma City at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Toronto at Phoenix, 9 p.m.
Utah at Portland, 10 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Sacramento, 10 p.m.
Saturday's games
Denver at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
L.A. Clippers at Cleveland, 7:30 p.m.
Miami at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Golden State at Memphis, 8 p.m.
Detroit at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Indiana at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Brooklyn at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.
Sacramento at Utah, 9 p.m.
Dallas at Portland, 10 p.m.

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AMVIC LICENSEES

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You may be a nice guy but most likely you will refuse to come to the rescue of someone who is in distress today. It may seem heartless but it's the only way they are going to learn.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Too often you have held back while those with considerably less talent have achieved the kind of success that should have been yours. Shed your inhibitions and let the world see what a star you are.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You may be under pressure to apologize for something you said to a friend or colleague but is that wise? Not if you truly meant it. Besides, why give them the impression that you can be easily swayed?

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You may be behind in your schedule but don't worry about it. If anything, you should be aiming to conserve your energy now — if only because by the early part of next week you will be working harder than ever.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
There are only so many hours in a day, so identify your priorities and don't try to do everything at once. Aim for quality rather than quantity in all things at all times. One way or another, it will be enough.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You have reason to be annoyed with someone but because you are an agreeable individual, you may allow them to wriggle out of it by saying the right words. That'd be a mistake.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It's not like you to look back and wish things had been different but that may be your attitude today. OK, so you could have done a lot of things differently and some things better but that's life.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Everything is going according to plan and even though you may not get all the things you desire today, you will certainly get all the things you need. The cosmos, as always, are looking over and looking after you.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You may not be the best in certain areas but in one field of endeavor you have no equals and that is what you should be focusing on now. Don't try to be all things to all men.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Close your ears to criticism and don't waste time trying to get even with those who have let you down or said hurtful things. Time is too precious to waste on petty people .

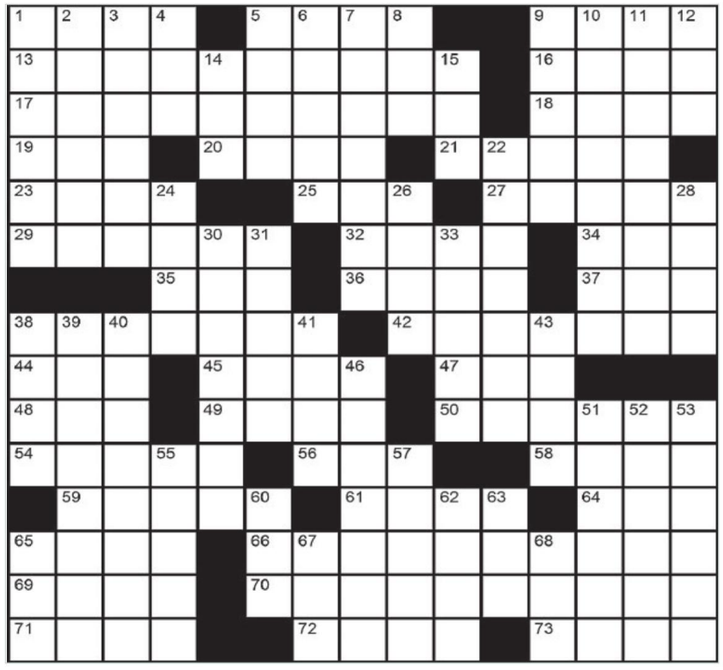
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
There is no point complaining about a certain person's behaviour when what they are doing now is what they did yesterday and the day before that. It's in their nature, so either accept it or move away from their influence.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You need more fun in your life but you won't get it doing the same old things with the same old people. The planets are urging you to be more adventurous. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across

1. Abodes-in-buildings, e.g.
5. Labels
9. Biblical boats
13. E! Canada host who previously hosted "So You Think You Can Dance Canada": 2 wds.
16. Bulk containers
17. London, ON's nickname: 2 wds.
18. Meat cut
19. Univ. paper
20. Incite
21. Be an active volcano
23. Old music high notes
25. Pick-up-sticks game
27. "__ There Yet?" (2005): 2 wds.
29. Teeth-related
32. Head's holder
34. Headed
35. "Bravo!"
36. Ex-VP Al
37. Papua New Guinea seaport
38. "The Daily Show" host Jon
42. London, ON university
44. Legume
45. Lady Gaga song
47. Lady's man
48. Computer key
49. Actress Ms. Cannon
50. Does canine work
54. __ beaucoup!
56. Veggie of Japan
58. Venus de __ (Ancient statue)
59. Lost & __
61. Waning waves
64. "Platoon" (1986) war, for short
65. Designer, Christian __ (b.1905 - d.1957)
66. PM Harper's hockey book: 3 wds.
69. Prefix meaning 'High'
70. Canadian actress who starred in 1933's "42nd Street": 2 wds.
71. "__, __ have you decided yet?" (Er, like, did you make up your mind?)
72. Wall St. landmark, commonly
73. Fewer

Down

1. Bruce Wayne's butler
2. Celebrity magazine
3. Scottish pattern
4. "__-Devil" (1989)
5. Musician Mr. Puente
6. Rio Tinto __ (Aluminum company based in Montreal)
7. Soaring
8. Band's performance
9. "It's all _ __." (Foggy memory comment)
10. Canadian painter, Jean Paul __ (b.1923 - d.2002)
11. Sweaters and scarves
12. US tax ID
14. Food additive
15. Deli bread
22. Makes much money: 2 wds.
24. Pack
26. Cat call
28. Apple/snake lieu
30. 1992 Disney animated flick
31. "Madame Curie" (1943) director, Mervyn __
33. Salad green
38. Internet junk
39. Cinematic federal agency, __ Canada
40. Have carrots or potatoes, basically: 2 wds.
41. "Heart and Soul" '80s group
43. Hair salon task
46. BC city in the northern Okanagan
51. Conclusion
52. Scotiabank Saddledome team
53. Actress/entrepreneur Suzanne
55. Oddity
57. Does as instructed
60. __ es Salaam, Tanzania
62. Create cupcakes
63. Fr. holy woman
65. Brother's sis, to Mom [abbr.]
67. Son-of-a-__
68. Collective Soul song

Yesterday's Crossword

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	4			6		9		1
			5		4		3	2
	7	3			5		8	
			2		6			
	8		1			4	9	
9	2		7		1			
8		6		9			7	3

Yesterday's Sudoku

9	1	4	7	3	6	8	2	5
2	5	6	1	8	4	3	7	9
3	8	7	9	2	5	1	6	4
6	4	9	3	7	1	5	8	2
5	7	8	2	4	9	6	3	1
1	3	2	5	6	8	9	4	7
8	6	5	4	9	7	2	1	3
7	2	1	6	5	3	4	9	8
4	9	3	8	1	2	7	5	6

Weather

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MAX: -26° MIN: -26°	MAX: -15° MIN: -28°	MAX: -3° MIN: -18°

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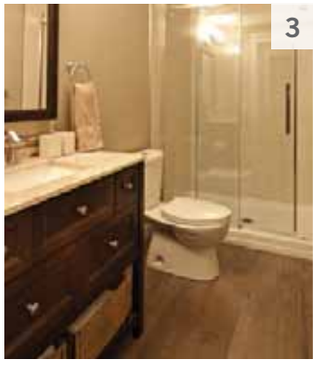

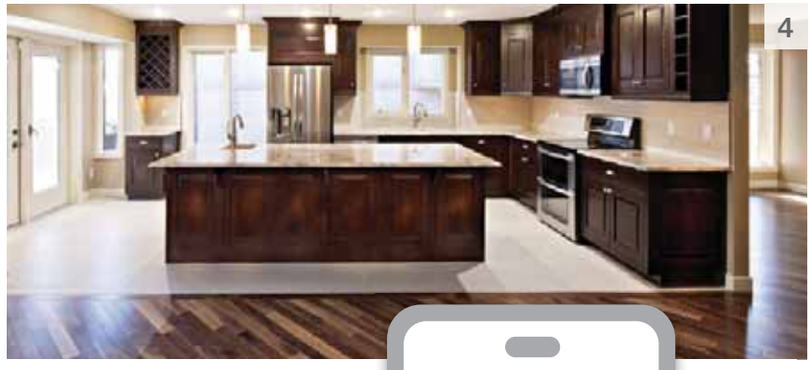

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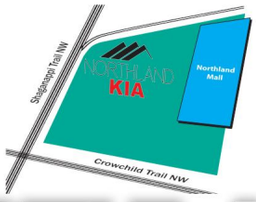

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